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THIRTY SEASONS  
IN  
SCANDINAVIA

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Received March 30, 1904.





**THIRTY SEASONS IN  
SCANDINAVIA**









IN 'GAMLE NORGE'

THIRTY SEASONS  
IN  
SCANDINAVIA

BY

E. B. KENNEDY

AUTHOR OF "THE BLACK POLICE OF QUEENSLAND," ETC.

LONDON  
EDWARD ARNOLD

1903

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THIRTY SEASONS  
IN  
SCANDINAVIA

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<sup>Ⓜ</sup>

LONDON

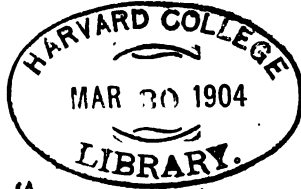
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TO  
*MY WIFE*



## PREFACE

It has been suggested to me upon several occasions that I should write a treatise upon fishing in Scandinavia, and once an old sportsman proposed that we should indite a book together, suggesting terms which, to say the least, were flattering.

I have declined these invitations for various reasons. I have asked my friends to look at the many shelves containing endless books on Norway—libraries which, be it remarked, I saw many years ago at Messrs. Bennetts, Christiania. I have also stated that circumstances connected with streams, lakes, and fishing quarters are apt to alter in unexpected ways every year. Finally, and most important of all, I have informed these friendly brothers of the angle that one could hardly write a truthful book on the subject without encroaching on private waters, and there has been too much of that already, without touching upon it in print. But as the result of pleasant chats lately in one of Messrs. Wilson's Liners, the idea was once more urged upon me by my friend Dr. Crosse, a brother angler and a man of vast experience of the world, together with other old "Norwegian" friends; but this time it took a different form, namely, that I should give some experience of my own amongst the trout and grayling for the benefit of those who, by reason of being much engaged at home, rush off for their short but well-earned holiday, carrying with them such tackle and flies as are recommended by



possibly interested persons—also that I should add to this something of sport with rifle and gun.

It is to the youthful sportsmen chiefly—those who have had but little experience amongst the trout, char, and grayling of Scandinavia—that I address the following lines as to hints of flies, modes of capture, and other small, but what I have found to be important, details connected with the gentle art.

I am, perhaps, the more able to do this as the present year (1903) represents my one and thirtieth consecutive visit to Scandinavia, and during these many seasons I have wandered much both on the sea-board and in the far interior, with rod, gun, and rifle. Nearly every passenger to Norwegian fjords carries a rod with him. For myself, a fly rod in short lengths and fitting into a portmanteau, accompanies me to any part of the world to which I may be bound. I was glad to know that it was with me when last in Jersey, for there are trout in the reservoir of the waterworks in that island; and at the Antipodes in days long past I have enjoyed capital sport with rod and fly.

What induced me first to visit that land “where every prospect pleases”; the land where dwell our kinsmen, where no vile gutter press prevails, and where the Englishman may roam the towns without being insulted?

That interesting book, “Through Norway with a Knapsack,” came into my hands, and I went.

Whilst being far from anything like a past master in the art of angling, yet in keenness I yield to no one, and that, I trust, goes for something, and will, I hope, be appreciated by the tyro and others who bear in mind that all the incidents mentioned in the work concerning the gentle art are first hand, *i.e.* taken from my own experience.

Otherwise, I lay no more claim to originality in the following pages than is due to one who for some years "ploughed his own furrow," and who now has collected from his diaries thoughts and experiences connected with these wanderings.

My thanks are due to the Editors of the *Field*, *Fishing Gazette*, *Land and Water*, and *Baily's Magazine*, for permission to reproduce sundry articles of mine which appeared in these publications.

I am specially indebted, among others, to Mr. Crichton Somerville for the excellent photographs on winter sports which he executed himself and gave to me. Also to Mr. Dallas for some capital views of the Nor Reisen River, which he took on the spot.

E. B. K.



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# THIRTY SEASONS IN SCANDINAVIA

## CHAPTER I

History of Scandinavian Races—Origin of the Lapps—Lively Experience of a River—Kile Fjord—Logan River—Burnt out—Gudvangen in the Seventies.

SOME of us still retain in greater or less degree the barbarism of our forefathers ; we hanker after the unspoilt lands be they in Australia or Scandinavia, where conventionalism is unknown and the spirit is at rest. What of the rough life we find? Is not this part of that which we sought? The roughing is merely an inducement to exercise our inventive and exploring capabilities and make the best camp we can, sometimes having to depend upon ourselves alone with what woodcraft remains to us. That which we have to fight consists not of wild men nor beasts, but we must use our senses against the danger of being "bushed," either in the back blocks of the dark woods, or the wild, high fjelds ; these latter being the worst owing to climatic conditions and the absence of timber for firing. There is the real charm of Scandinavia ; without necessarily climbing the highest peaks, to roam the mountain heights and secluded valleys of from 1000 to 2000 feet, for there one finds the greatest variety of spoil both for the hunter and naturalist.

A

These bracing uplands have ever possessed the greatest fascination for the writer. The utter solitude, the great silent valleys with their rocky sides, their sparse covering of poor grass and withered ling, where you may walk for a week and never see a human being nor even the tracks of cattle, but where the spoor of a wandering buck reindeer may "fill your eye," or you may stumble upon a colony—a warren—of the mountain fox, that small and poorly "pelted" rascal of a dirty blue who has left the discarded bones of hare and feathered game outside his burrow; whilst a great snowy owl sits solemnly on a rock and "mews" at you within easy shot, yet you do not molest him, in spite of the farmers' injunctions away down in the valley to kill all such birds of prey. And at length the whole world seems suddenly lit up with a rosy light, when you begin to look more closely to your bearings, to feel mechanically if those wax matches are safely in your pocket and dry, for though you may get no fuel up here you will perhaps yet require them, failing to hit off the woods at the proper point on retracing your steps to the valley 2000 feet below. It may be that the wanderer has set out, rifle on back, to seek out one of the great feelers of a glacier. He has slain a reindeer on the way thither, and by the time this has been galloped and hidden as far as possible—a long job single-handed—the shadows have lengthened, the compass and exact bearings must be consulted, and best pace put on for home. There is another side to this rosy picture, and I will tell of one or two snowy night adventures which befell me later on in these pages.

It is not every one who bears in mind that the Jostedal Glacier is the largest and finest in Europe, and covered with perpetual snow. This gigantic octopus shoots its twenty-four icy tentacles into the

valleys which form its boundaries. Its length is about 60 English miles, and area about 500 square miles.

No one has properly seen Norway until he has been up and sojourned on the roof of that grand country; and although here the reindeer hunter from the very nature of his avocation has all the chances, yet the climb will well repay the tourist also, for turn which way he will, the striking views which he descries on a clear sunny day, the immensity and colouring as his eye follows over fjeld and valley, lakes and rivers by the score, both at his feet and as far as the most powerful glasses can depict the endless space, will cause him to rest and be thankful. But I am not going to write a treatise on the features nor scenery of Norway. In the first place, I do not possess the descriptive power, and in the next, have been too much dragged about by paid guides in other parts of the Continent to view their old churches, broken statues, or belvideres to wish to inflict this on others. The pleasure is to find out a view, a panorama, for oneself. I have seen most of the glorious waterfalls or fosses of Norway, but these I approached my own way, after the first year or two, and confess that after the first steadfast view of these grand falls my eyes have been held by the pool below, with possibilities for trout. Yet for any one who wishes to gain the most reliable and fullest information upon Norway *in every form*, let him obtain a work, written by eminent Norwegians and translated into English, entitled “Norway.” It can be procured at Christiania, a book of some six hundred pages, embracing in its contents geography, geology, climate, animal life, plant life, history, hunting, prehistoric periods, painting, literature, and many other items. It was issued as an “official publication for the Paris Exhibition of 1900.”

Mr. Montagu Sibthorp kindly lent it me, and the reason I specially borrowed it was to find an answer to the question I had repeatedly asked in vain, Where did the Lapps originally come from?

I therefore quote shortly from the book on this subject. The chapter on Anthropology commences by stating that—

“By far the greater part of the population of Norway belongs to the Germanic race, Northmen in the proper sense of the word. In addition to these there is a small proportion of Finno-Ugrian origin—Lapps 17 per cent., and Finns  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

“The first comprehensive anthropological investigation of Norwegian, as of several other nations, was made during the American Civil War. The Norwegians proved to be the tallest of all Europeans, but came after the Americans (and Indians). In breadth of chest they are excelled by none.

“The Norwegians are no more an unmixed race in an anthropological sense than any other European nation. C. O. Arbo's comprehensive investigations prove that a distinction must be made between two types. The first type is that which characterises Norwegians as a whole, namely great height and fairness (white skin, fair hair, and blue eyes). By the side of this type we find, however, another. This type seems originally dark-complexioned, with dark hair and brown eyes; height only medium. The type is certainly closely related to the Central European brachycephalate in South Germany, France, &c., the Alpine type. The Lapps form a very distinct race. Their stature is very small, perhaps not averaging more than five feet in men of pure Lapp race. Their language is nearly allied to that of the Finlanders, more distantly to the other ‘Finno-Ugrian’ or ‘Ural-Attic’ languages.

“There is now no longer any reason for upholding the old doctrine that the Lapps originally peopled the whole of Scandinavia. They probably came to Norway later than either of the two types that are found amongst the Norwegians proper. They must have come from the east by a northern route as a hunting and fishing people, with the culture of the stone age. A particular type of stone implements has been referred specially to them—‘the Arctic stone age’—and these implements must have been in use among them much longer than among the Scandinavians.

“The true nomadic Lapps possibly first learnt the full use of the reindeer, upon which they are so dependent for their subsistence, from the Scandinavians. A thousand years ago, however, they were found as fishers at the head of the fjords, or wandering as nomads among the mountains, in very much the same districts as now, hardly south of the Jemtland. It is only recently that they have advanced in any numbers worth mentioning along the mountain ridge south of 64°.

“Norway has received other immigrants from the east. The immigration from Finland, about the year 1600, to the extensive border forest east of the Glommen was of some significance. But the most important emigration from Finland has taken place recently to the two most northerly provinces. These Finns are called in Norway ‘Kvæner,’ from the ancient name of the people living round Bottenviken. Anthropologically the Kvæns occupy in most points an intermediate position between Norwegians and Lapps. In everyday life, too, they occupy a kind of mediatory position between the two so different nationalities.”

The above then answers my question as to where the Lapps originally came from. They fulfil their part in life, and I have spent many pleasant times in their company. But the true makers of the country are the real “white men”—to use a colonial expression. Not to mention others, three of the most modern of these heroes now stand before the world—Nansen and Sverdrup, also Sven Hedin, the Swede.

I will now give a short account of my first arrival in Norway, because it was quickly followed by a rather exciting incident, and the relation may further act as a warning against picking up a casual boatman.

Upon first landing at Christiania, my mate—who was a young Australian—and myself put up at a small *privat* hotel. Our ignorance of the language was the cause of many mistakes being made; one was of rather a ludicrous nature. I had a little black-and-tan Queensland terrier with me, and requested a man in

the hotel to take charge of her during our absence in the town. My companion also asked him for the name of a good hairdresser. Having finished our shopping, which consisted chiefly in purchasing English ammunition at a large establishment (Torgensen's), most of which was devoted to the sale of firearms, we returned to the hotel, where we were met by the landlord and a little crowd, in the centre of which appeared the chief hairdresser of the town, holding in his arms my little terrier, the latter being partly enveloped in the orthodox white napkin of the haircutting rooms. The man of scissors appeared to be in the last stage of anxiety and nervousness, yet concealed much of this emotion by means of profound bows, to which we duly responded. At length, to our relief, a man approached who spoke a little English, and thus addressed us, pointing at the same time to the man in the white apron: "This is the best haircutter in the city, but though he has tried every way he cannot shave the little dog. He is very sorry indeed to have failed, but if the little dog grows some more 'ool in our climate he will try again by 'm by."

We were presently introduced to a gentleman who weighed thirty-four stone. This was the genial Norwegian giant, Major Hansen. He conversed in good English on many subjects, relating his thrilling experience on certain battlefields, where the enemy was utterly unable to bear off his huge proportions as prisoner. He showed us his old scars and bullet wounds, and finally, after indulging in two or three dozen of beer, told us where to go and fish. We said good-bye, and ended by buying a poodle of him.

We found Christiania a pleasant town, but wished to get up country, and so buying an Amt map, which showed some good-sized rivers, we set off upon what

proved a very disastrous expedition. I copy the following from a Letts's Diary, dated July 1872 :—

A day ever to be remembered by L., self, and a friend we found at Krona—Mr. Rosling—a gentleman who photographed and who kindly acted as interpreter on our behalf.

The river here, at Vickersund, joins two lakes, is broad, swift, and deep, and spanned by a bridge close to Krona Hotel. About a mile or so below the bridge are the rapids, boiling and seething over the rocks. The river at this time was much swollen. I had been rowing cautiously about some small islands with L., fishing, and not getting any sport, we were returning to the hotel, when a native volunteered to take us lower down, where he said there were some large fish. We noticed that the man climbed into the boat in a very clumsy manner. Once there his manner seemed eccentric, and he talked much in Norske. At first he pulled pretty steadily. L. was spinning, I was fly fishing, when the rower suddenly bumped us into a small island. He then broke away the whole of the port rowlock, obliging him to come farther aft, and we were ordering him home, when he wrenched the boat broadside to the current, and in the act of turning fell on the gunwale; the water poured in, and the next moment we were trying to find the bottom in about eight feet of water. The boat went down with the drunken rower grappling her.

Our clothes were thick, my boots of the heaviest. On striking out a few strokes I found L. holding on to a triangular board which had floated out of the bows of our craft. Telling him of my intention to try and help him and myself, at the same time I endeavoured to swim to the shore, pushing him towards a backwater some yards away, but soon gave



up the attempt ; it was utterly useless, and only wasted strength. Nothing could be done in such a stream, being so heavily weighted, except drift with it. Finding a long, narrow board I stuck to it, treading water ; L. and self going along side by side, he, poor fellow, going under many times, but sticking manfully to his triangle, which, however, played him some scurvy tricks in its erratic course, diving at unexpected moments. By this time the whole village above us was astir, and boats putting off. I saw one literally carried on the shoulders of men across a potato patch, they running the while. I shouted loudly once—L. the next day said he thought it was my dying “cooee”—and then kept cool and watched L., though little could have been done had he gone altogether, the difficulty being to change one’s position, though an attempt would have been made. However, I was at length relieved to see him get the board under his back, and shouted to him to keep it there. This he heard and kept well to. What caused me the greatest anxiety now was the knowledge that the rapids were only some few hundred yards below us. I had fished along the bank the night before till I came within a few yards of them. L. had not accompanied me on that occasion, but he told me subsequently that whilst in the water the roar of this foss appalled him.

The stream now was getting stronger and stronger and converging to the suck, when I felt my feet strike in about five feet of water. As for holding, it was out of the question, and though I managed once to stop myself for a few seconds, it was only to be hurled on again. However, I neither lost my head nor my hat, but watched anxiously for the boats, and tried to calculate whether they would reach us before we were sucked down into the fall. The native holding on to

the half-sunken boat was now nearest the rapids, L. some forty yards above him, whilst I brought up the rear about twenty yards above L. The men in the boats were pulling as they had never pulled before, and each, as I afterwards noticed, had taken the precaution to have a spare oar with him, a rule which is enforced by law, but in this special case it showed great forethought on behalf of these good farmers. A boat manned by a single boy was the first to reach me. The rower made frantic efforts to lug me in, crying all the time. However, with hands on the gunwale, I was all right, and made him pull on to L., but on looking round found that another boat, manned by two men, was already close alongside the native, who was nearest to the foss. They picked him up, and L. was saved by the same men directly afterwards, though my boy was getting fast up to him. I got into my boat over the bows, as she was very small and frail. Then our respective crews had to pull for all our lives out of the stream.

They told us afterwards that two minutes later they dare not have tried coming up to us, for then they would have been right in the very suck and on the lip of the falls. They further said that we had been fifteen minutes in the water, and I then found the advantage of having practised swimming in my clothes whilst in Queensland. In spite of the boots, possibly because of them, I found treading water the best thing to do. My plank was of little use, the eddies causing it to jump and dive, and in the more rushing part of the stream it was almost unmanageable. It was a curious sensation to be drifting down the river and watching the people frantically rushing about the banks a long way up. They could not have run down the bank to us, as a long creek intersected.

However slow the Norwegian natives may be as a rule, they were quick enough there. The boatman was very bad when dragged out, and L. had to be led home and put to bed.

I certainly felt no worse beyond being very tired in the legs; luckily the water was not very cold. Everybody, and particularly Rosling, was most attentive, stripping and rubbing us and putting our clothes to dry in the sun. Nearly everything was destroyed in our pockets. Our watches had stopped at half-past one, when the accident occurred. We lost between us some £20 worth of rods, tackle, and the usual useless "New Chum's" outfit. The boat after all was picked up, having been stopped by some logs in a backwater on the edge of the foss. The women had been shrieking about the hotel, seizing Rosling's hands, exclaiming that the Englishmen were drowned. In the evening we sent for our rescuers and rewarded them. The man that capsized us came to beg for forgiveness, said that it was entirely his fault, but that he had lost all his dollars (the currency at that time), as he carried his money with him. It was proved that he had been drinking hard the morning of the mishap, but as he had lied to others, and said that we had caught a fish and so upset the boat, we declined to have anything to do with him beyond giving him a small present for the sake of his children. There were two blacksmiths, a tailor, and a watch-maker amongst the men who rescued us. Later on we walked down to view the spot, and then saw the long distance we had drifted.

Our rods and gear were subsequently dragged for when the waters went down, but nothing was ever recovered. We telegraphed home for fresh tackle, and returned to Christiania. Had I known it, Torgensen of

Christiania, Milne Grieg of Bergen, or Fornøes of Thronhjem could have supplied our wants with every sort of English-made tackle, cheap, and of the best quality; but during our last visit to the capital we had only invested in cartridges at Torgensen's.

Since those days Vikersund has been noted for its famous waters "St. Olaf's Baths," Modum, within an hour's drive from Vikersund station. The situation of the baths is very beautiful, and, what is more to the purpose, especially beneficial in cases of weakness of the respiratory organs, and to those in the stage of convalescence.

Having returned to the capital we sought the advice of the late Mr. Bennett, whose kindness to me at the time, and that of his sons during the many years that have since elapsed, has been heartily appreciated. He suggested our trying Kile fjord as a fishing centre, and never have I had a straighter "tip."

Coasting to Christiansand, we thence carrioted to Kile and its lakes. There were neither railways nor steamers there, excepting, of course, the coasting boats.

We put up at a rough little hut on the shore of one of the lakes. The pleasant owner of this establishment made us as comfortable as possible, with his little boxes of hay beds for night quarters and bread and cheese for meals. The sight of the rods showed him what we were in search of, and without putting us to the pain of attempting bad Norwegian, he placed a boat at our disposal, and with a wave of the hand, embracing the entire lake, shoved us off. And what a glut of sport we had! if ever there was a "rising" lake this was one, and many times we had two and even three fish on to each rod, the flies being the usual loch ones of Scotland. There were three distinct sorts of trout in all parts of these waters, some silvery,

others spotted red, and again fish with many dark spots showing against the vermilion points. The average was a good pound. Certain bays were boomed across; over these huge logs we dragged the boat, and found that they were perfect sanctums of the silvery shoals.

Such sport we had never had, and we remained some days at our log hut, bathing and fishing, and coming home every evening with four or five dozen trout, none of which were wasted, for the worthy farmer salted most of them for his own use during the winter. Now there was one specially good catch where the lake debouched into a fair-sized river. It was above this foss that we always secured the largest fish, but the sound of the booming of these waters rendered L. so nervous that at length he declined to go in that direction. He could not forget that other foss which he had nearly negotiated at Vickersund. So, after some most enjoyable days of first-class angling, he left for England, whilst I accepted the invitation of an old Colonial friend—Mr. Archer of Laurvig—to accompany him up the Logan River in quest of salmon. I see by my journal that after some hours' carrioling from Laurvig we reached the foss of Stubben, and there put up our rods. The old miller living at this spot, who said his name was Vrate—I found afterwards that his ancestors had landed in Norway under the name of Wright—told me that the salmon in the river would only take a fly of a dull hue, a brown sad-coloured nondescript, and my companion was of the same opinion; now up to this I had had but little salmon fishing, and knew nothing of the art, but had a book full of gaudy flies, like most beginners. I learnt much during the four hours' fishing which ensued, and at least two facts which I have often successfully practised

in the many years' fishing I have enjoyed since that day. The first is simply the following: if salmon will not take the regular flies that are put over them, give them something startling—a regular shocker—this will sometimes, not always, bring them savagely up. My companion set me up with a local dun-coloured fly of suitable size, whilst he put another of the same sort on his own line. We flogged that stream from the mill to the foss one after the other without result, then crossed the river and fished the opposite bank, in all two hours of heavy casting, and rods were more weighty in those days; wearily we went back to the mill and had coffee. Mechanically I opened my brand-new book with its gaudy stock of unused Irish flies. It was not “for the like of me,” a new arrival and one utterly inexperienced in the ways of salmon fishing, to suggest, but I took the most brilliant specimen of an insect, the like of which never existed, and attached it to my line; my companions meanwhile regarding me with pitying glances, and as I rose to go remarked, “That thing is no good.” To my astonishment I had not made half-a-dozen casts when I was in to a salmon, upon which I cooeed lustily. Out rushed the two men from the mill, and my friend gaffed a ten-pounder in as many minutes, and then they sat down and talked excitedly in Norwegian.

I in my ignorance had broken all the sacred rules of the river—such a thing was unheard of! The miller rushed back for his spectacles, and having secured them the two sat down and held a formal consultation. Every portion of the body, wing, and hackle of the fly was carefully inspected, laid on its side, smelt at, held up to the light, and then I was asked who made it. Pat Hearn, I told them. At length, after some hesitation, my friend was induced to take another brilliant

Irishman from the book. The miller and I sat down to watch him, and presently he hooked a grand fish. He was a splendid fisherman, and I now learnt a useful lesson. Upon feeling the steel the salmon rushed up stream and fought round and round the miller's pool, but finding those tactics of no avail he at length dropped sullenly down tail foremost; yard by yard did he thus approach the foss, held hard all the time.

The very weight of fish and stream must carry him over, and I thought it was all up, when within some twenty yards of the brink of the fall I saw the fisherman slack away his line altogether.

The extra strain taken off, the fish moved up stream under the bank in the slack water, and was eventually gaffed in the miller's pool, weight 27 lbs.

Before we left I had another, and my friend two more, when we were obliged to put up our tackle, as we had a long drive home.

This day's fishing proved a useful lesson to me from that time on.

When we reached the house of my host in time for supper that evening I was made aware of a delightful custom, which might be beneficially carried out in England.

The ladies waited upon the gentlemen!

It was not unusual in Norway at that time. Let the "mere man" picture this delightful state of affairs. A table covered with the best viands that could be procured, flanked by many bottles of excellent wines. The men shown to their seats by their fair hostesses, who stood behind the guests and waited upon them right through the meal, supplying their every want in a way that could only be described as loving hospitality. To a stranger in a strange land it was at first somewhat embarrassing, but as this delightful custom

was repeated at every meal, one became pleasantly used to it. It was also at this town of Laurvig that I made the acquaintance of Mr. Colin Archer, famous as the builder of the best pilot and other boats, and latterly renowned over the whole world as the maker of the stalwart *Fram*. I renewed my acquaintance with these hospitable and kind families in after years, and again fished the Stubben water, my companion being the late Admiral Sir Henry Fairfax; but it was one of the dead-low water summers, and we did but little.

The only incident of that season occurred at Drammen. Installed at an hotel there, we were woke up one night by a Norwegian "boots" strolling into the room and casually remarking that the hotel was on fire all about, and "Did we wish to leave?" We rushed out in scanty clothing; our "boots" followed with a couple of bags and an armful of clothes, and introduced us to a baker's shop over the way, where we completed our toilettes to the lights of the blazing edifice. Three buildings in all were burnt to the ground, but the only remark the baker made as he turned to his dough-pans was, "It is all right, they are well insured."

But to return to first experiences. Sailing from Laurvig I made my way to the Lærdal, where Mr. Randall, artist and fisherman, had bade me come. He seemed to possess the whole of the river, and the sport, both with salmon and sea trout, was excellent, whilst the best of brown-trout fishing was to be found in the upper reaches.

Whilst in the valley of the Lærdal I was told by a farmer, who was engaged at his haymaking, that there was an excellent river full of lax at Gudvangen, and that no one was fishing it, so I hastened off to see whether the owners would let it.



Arriving at the mouth of the river in due course, and with my coat drenched through, owing to heavy rains which had set in, I walked into a commodious hut and asked for the landlord, whom, to my relief, I found to be proficient in the English tongue. He told me that the whole river belonged to himself, and that he would mention the rent he wanted for it another day; that meantime I could fish as much as I liked, but above all, I was not to show what I had caught, as his neighbours were very jealous of him. "And now," he concluded, "your coat is very wet, so I will put it in the chicken." Upon my suggesting that the coat was a large one, he merely smiled in a pitiful way at my ignorance, with the remark, "And my chicken is also a big one."

The lax, as usual, turned out to be sea trout, and I devoted the next day to them. I found the river in spate and not available for the fly, but a "Derby trout-killer" fetched two and three and sometimes more out of each of the best pools, so that when darkness came on I had half a sackful of sea trout running up to 3 lbs. for individual fish. These I stowed carefully at intervals in little caves all along the river; and next morning before daylight started to collect them with the landlord. This worthy man, who had looked after me well at his hostelry, giving me the best of everything, begged for complete silence as we passed up the river bank. Having arrived at the uppermost "plant" of fish, he asked me to place them in the bag he had brought, whilst he proceeded to spy around for his *fiender*, or enemies, and for this purpose perched himself on a rock above me. All this seemed very mysterious, but it did not trouble me.

Presently, just before break of dawn, I heard in subdued tones from the sentinel, "I shall speak to

you in very bad language in Norwegian, and you must be angry too, there comes an enemy ;" and forthwith a torrent of forcible lingo was hurled at my head, to which I responded as strongly, and with certain references which made the good man stare—not understanding the terms applied. Then he enlisted the newcomer to help with the fish, evidently referring to me meanwhile as a first-class poacher.

The three of us proceeded to the inn with the whole of the spoil, when the stranger departed, evidently satisfied, my man having filled him up with a good dram, telling him at the same time that I should be reported.

My host was now in high glee, and having walked round the house, which was empty, with the exception of our two selves, he reached for his long pipe, and thus addressed me: "I keep the best fish for our breakfast; I do not put the others in the chicken, but on board the little steamer which comes presently." Then, after many puffs of his pipe: "Ja! The Englishman said he would pay me next year, but he promised to pay me this year and did not. You say you are going to the Dovre fjeld; I show you the best way, and give you plenty *mad* for the journey."

The good man filled my bag with provisions, and declined to accept anything in payment. The whole affair seemed a bit mixed, but I naturally did not attempt to probe the matter, yet had a suspicion that I had been the innocent means of "doing" some person or persons. He was highly delighted, and went into roars of laughter when I told him that he must use the word kitchen, not chicken, when referring to his cooking apartment. We finally drank a *skaal* together, shook hands, and parted.

B

## CHAPTER II

First Reindeer—Dovre Fjeld—The “King” Sleeps—Primitive but Sociable Habits of the Peasantry—Those Boots—A Farmer’s Stalk—Lesje Trout—Aarmot Trout and Grayling—A Norske Wake.

ON leaving these sporting valleys I held for Jerkin, on the Dovre fjeld, knapsack and gun on my back, staying at various little places on the way for game or fish. At one rough hut at the side of the track I stopped to fish a neighbouring stream.

The sport was poor—too high an altitude, I was informed, for trout to rise—so I returned to my lodgings in the evening. No one appeared to be at home, but presently a young man entered carrying a volunteer rifle in his hand. We exchanged nods, when he put his head through an inner door and bellowed out, “Grease.” Then turning to me he remarked, in pure English, “The old fool’s always sleeping in there, but that wakes him up.” Seeing that I had to do with an Englishman, I asked, “Is that his name?” “Oh no,” responded my volunteer; “that’s Norwegian for pig; bacon’s the only thing they have here.”

The old farmer soon appeared, and without a word stuffed a side of fat bacon inside his arm, cut junks therefrom, made up the fire and fried them. As soon as he had satisfied his appetite my countryman began to talk, and told me that he had that day shot his third reindeer buck, at the same time hinting pretty strongly that he meant to keep the place to himself. He further informed me that the British firm which

employed him gave him five weeks' holiday, and that he always came to this spot and stalked by himself, but that if I liked we might start up the mountain together next day. Now, though I had done a little in other countries, I had never so far even seen a reindeer, so judged that this was a good opportunity to be initiated. My new acquaintance seemed to be somewhat selfish by nature, and when next morning he intimated that I should carry his portion of gear and the sack containing the lunch into the bargain, I made no remark, but took my gun and threw the bag of victuals over my shoulder, leaving him his own belongings. Taking my gun seemed to annoy him, and he begged me not to shoot at anything but a fox, and ended up by giving me a long lecture on the danger of losing oneself in the mountains. After an hour's climbing, and as we were approaching the fjeld, he told me that he should diverge to the right whilst I should go to the left, but on no account was I to fail meeting him in a couple of hours at the rendezvous—a pinnacle of rocks which he pointed out in the distance.

Deer were plentiful in those days, and as luck would have it, I spied three in a valley soon after I left him. I crept down—the wind was right—and from boulder to boulder I stalked, and got within fifty yards of what I judged to be a fine buck with beautiful horns, knocked the beast over with my Powell 12-bore, rushed up, thought the horns were rather thin, and found I had shot a doe, not then knowing that male and female reindeer both carry horns.

I arrived at the pinnacle of rocks at the time appointed, ate my lunch, smoked, and seeing no sign of my artful acquaintance, made tracks to the hut, and got the old man to show me the heads of the deer

shot before I came. I found they were all does, or *simle* as the farmer called them. I told him that I had shot a deer, and that he had only to peer over into the first valley on the top of the fjeld when he would see a newspaper on a staff marking the spot. He seemed to understand my explanations, with an Amt map to aid. I then left a note for his guest, stating that he would have found the paper which had contained the luncheon at the place appointed, and that I advised him to study the sexes of deer more closely, as I had discovered that all his so-called bucks were does.

A short rest and I resumed my route for Jerkin on the Dovre fjeld, and arrived there without further incident. Here was a rich farm inhabited by a numerous family, and whilst hesitating to whom I should address myself in my very limited Norwegian, a man came forward with, "I guess you're an Englishman." This was a relief indeed, for now I had an interpreter, Olaf having been some years in the States. He said he would interpret all my wishes to his father, who was king of the place, showed me a nice bedroom, and gave me a good supper. That evening I had an interview with the king, Olaf interpreting, and he promised the next day to show me his best fishing lake, which I found marked upon my map. That evening I strolled out to a stream near by, and caught some nice grayling up to a pound weight.

Next day heavy rain set in, and I waited in vain for the old chief. At length about midday I discovered Olaf fast asleep. Gently awakening him, I reminded him of his father's promise. "My father!" he ejaculated with an air of astonishment. "Why, it's raining!!"

"Well, what of that?" I replied, "best weather

for fishing." "Yes, but you don't understand; my father cannot make hay to-day, so he must drink; of course he is now very drunk: come and see. He always drinks plenty when he can't work." Sure enough his Majesty was lying dead drunk on a couch in an inner chamber, so I turned again to the son. "Can you take me up to this mountain lake?" He said he could, but that it would take three hours up the fjeld.

Having shouldered my knapsack and slung gun and rod on my back, I presently found Olaf waiting outside the house bearing on his shoulders a huge truss of grass. "What is that for?" "Why, for you to sleep on when we come to the sæter," was his reply. During our journey through the pine forests, I made my guide take off his load now and then, both to give him a rest and at the same time to enable me to prowl through the open glades, as signs of ryper were prevalent along the horse track. We eventually arrived at the sæter, which was on the high fjeld and far above the birch line. Olaf kicked in the door, for the hut was empty. He then found me butter, milk, and cheese, and having unearthed a frying-pan, lit the fire while I proceeded to spatchcock some delicate young ryper which I had shot; my guide meanwhile applied himself to some cheese and bread which was wedged together in his small wooden box or *tinne*. He told me that the lake was a quarter of an hour's walk over the next hill, and that when the girls returned to the hut they would show it me. The evening was now closing in, and after spreading the bundle of hay upon the floor Olaf bid me good-night and returned to the valley; and having finished my supper, I prepared to make myself comfortable for the night.

The simple incident which follows will hardly be credited except by the really old traveller of those primitive Norwegian days.

Tired as I was I soon had enough of the hay; it was new and damp, and the earthen floor was very lumpy, so I struck a light, and by the time I had used up half a box of matches discovered to my joy a broad box containing a dry hay bed with a rug of sheepskins thrown on the top. This was situated in an alcove of the one room in the hut. Here was I warm and snug as I crept under the fleeces. Having seemingly been asleep a few minutes, I was awakened by the sound of female voices; I could hear women muttering in awed tones as they stumbled amongst the hay of my lately deserted lair, so to assist them in their wanderings I struck a match, upon which they simply greeted me with a surprised stare. Then one of them asked me "Hvad slags landsman er du?" (What countryman are you?)

"Englishman from Jerkin," I made reply, whilst striking another match. Upon hearing this the girls conferred, seemed satisfied that I would not bite, and without another word one of them sprang over me on to the far side of the box, whilst the other calmly took the outside edge and pulled the sheepskins over the three of us with "God nat."

Realising that this was one of the customs of the country, I prepared to go to sleep without further remarks; but the coarse woollen petticoats of my fair companions proved somewhat stifling, boxed up as we all three were, whilst throaty noises followed by heavy snoring, for they seemed to go to sleep at once, were not conducive to slumber. Then again, finding the bed a foot too short for my limbs, I was compelled to curl up; but assuming this position evidently interfered

with the slumbers of the "off sider," as I was immediately rewarded by a sharp kick from a heavy, hard boot. However, I obviated any further of these gentle hints from either maiden by quietly pulling most of the hay from under me and forming two little buffers, one on each side. The atmosphere became cooler, and redolent as it was with the sweet odour of cows I slept heavily, so much so that when I awoke at dawn I found myself alone. The whole thing seemed like a dream, but being determined to find those girls I rushed out, cooeed loudly, and was answered from the cow-barn; one of them soon appeared, and I told her that coffee would be agreeable, so she lit a fire, singing a song in dialect in a gentle voice the while, which song I learnt later on: *Millom Bakkar og Berg ut med Havet*.

Whilst eating breakfast my hostess asked me many questions, few of which I understood; however, I picked up some useful words from her—had my first lesson, in fact. Then I explained by pantomime that I was going to swim in the tiny stream which tumbled down the neighbouring rocks, upon which she shuddered and left me. Later on she returned, and understanding that I wished to fish, escorted me to the top of the nearest hill, and there lay the lake at our feet. "Have you not an otter?" she asked. I shook my head and proceeded through the swamps to get at the water, but the sport turned out as I might have foreseen after hearing the ominous word otter, and I only got enough troutlets for a meal—yet very sweet they proved fried in cream. The girls came home early that evening, and told me that the next day being Saturday their two young men were coming up from the valley to visit them as usual from Saturday to Monday. This was a gentle hint to me; however, I made arrange-



ments for that night, as it was too late to return to Jerkin, and the lovers would not appear till next day.

So I got out my dictionary, pointed to the bed and said, "No boots to-night," at which they both screamed with laughter, and intimated that they hardly ever slept in their boots, but that I had so surprised them the previous night, that they had forgotten to take them off, and added that if they snored I was to kick them. So we compromised, and I went to sleep at once that night, lulled by the sweet odours of a cowshed, and did not wake till late, to find my erstwhile sleeping partners busily engaged about the hut and preparing my breakfast; and what a transformation in dress and general appearance!

Two neat little waitresses in becoming dark homespun dresses, their hair neatly brushed, and a new kerchief covering each flaxen head, instead of the gaudy hats which I have remarked of late years.

We parted the best of friends with much conversation, rather one-sided however. I offered them a little present, which they declined to take for some time, and when stuffing my few things into the knapsack found there a pair of warm *votter* (fingerless gloves), and so bade the dear things *Farvel*, to which they added, "Come again soon."

Descending the mountain, I met the two young men coming up—soaked through—but dressed in their very best. They said it was raining hard in the valley. We exchanged salutes and parted with smiles, but the conversation was limited as I had not much Norse, perhaps to my advantage on that occasion.

At that period there was no professional hunter in these districts, as now, who attended the foreign sportsman and charged seven or eight kroner a day, and more if he possessed a dog. Two kroner was all they

asked, and found themselves, unless it was hay-time, when three was the amount asked. I wished Olaf to take me after reindeer, but he said he must see about his hay, for, as it was still raining, of course the old "Gubbe" was still drunk. This was the time when liquor was freely used all over the country, and more than once I witnessed a bit of fighting amongst themselves with *tolknivs*, and peculiar warfare it was. Some of them would measure off about an inch of the blade, and show me that was the amount they meant to stick into the first man they could get hold of; but in the cases which came under my observation very little blood was spilt, as they were too far gone to hit straight. I have seen young women, two and three in a *stolkjærre* rolling about and singing, full of liquor, whilst their good-tempered pot-bellied pony was taking them steadily home. This was not a usual sight, however, merely a day's spree from the neighbouring market, and not to be compared with the sodden old hags one sees at home. All this drinking amongst the honest Norwegian country folk has happily long been put a stop to by the excellent Gothenburg liquor laws.

As before remarked, Olaf declined to accompany me out hunting, but eventually produced a young farm hand who had already killed three or four beasts. He showed me their horns, which appeared small, but as I had found out by this time, these hunters cared nothing for heads, but only went out for meat.

Tracks were numerous on the mountains, and I had already seen more than one good spoor of a large buck; there were no Lapps anywhere in the district, only wild deer were on these mountains. Before starting I got Olaf to tell Jens, the young hunter, that I wanted a he beast and not a she. The latter said that he would do his best, but that the "he's" were very difficult to

come near. The weapon this young farmer carried I cannot describe ; I know it took him a bad quarter of an hour before he could get the working parts into order, and there was much oiling of a rusty excrescence, in shape like a marlin-spike, which stood out near the breech, before he declared himself ready to start.

This time we kept away from the Sæter track, and after much twisting and turning through pine and birch forest arrived on the fjeld proper, and sat down to rest and refresh by the side of a brook. Then Jens said he would go and prospect whilst I stayed by the rivulet. Inside of an hour he was back, and I understood him to say that two bucks were feeding in a valley not far away.

I placed myself in his hands, and kept behind him step by step, intending to leave him when we got near. He made a very good stalk, crept up to a boulder and beckoned to me. The two beasts were there, not a hundred yards away, feeding, and then running a few yards in a jerky way before putting their noses again to the ground, as is the way with this class of deer.

They looked small, and getting the binoculars to bear I found them to be does without doubt. Jens was evidently appalled by my action in sitting down and filling a pipe, but it was a bit disheartening after these hours of toil to find only beasts which one would certainly rather spare. However, he was both elated and astonished when I told him I would like to see him kill one ; without more ado he crept off like a cat and made a splendid stalk. I watched him eagerly ; now he was within some sixty yards, and cautiously raising himself to fire, when either the eddies of wind shifted, as they often do in these high valleys, or he displaced a rock, for the deer suddenly trotted off at

speed, preventing a perfect broadside shot. Then it was my turn to be astonished, for he put down his rifle and merely gazed after them! When I joined him, he simply explained—by pantomime—that as a matter of course he never shot at anything running. It was time to return to Jerkin, and the chances were over for the day.

Thus my stalking experiences so far were paltry in the extreme.

Utter freedom and unlimited time is essential when one wishes to explore a country, be the place civilised or otherwise; and as I possessed the double advantage, it gave me a free hand, and I could travel where fancy took me, it mattered not to which point of the compass. I did most of my journeys on foot, but in a long stretch—as from Lærdal to Jerkin—would here and there hire a carriage, or a saddle-horse, from one of the farmers.

My next point from Jerkin was Lesje, but before quitting the former place a young student arrived. After the first salutations had been exchanged between us he commenced to address me very volubly in Norwegian, but finding that I could not follow him, he turned off at the same rate into Latin—a hateful language, which I had not heard since my boyhood. Here was the first time in my life that I had been addressed in it by a stranger. A dead language, and one which should have been buried long ago; and I thought feelingly of the time when, some twenty years previously, I had been unmercifully gutta-perchaed on the hand, at Brighton, for not being proficient in the grammar.

And now, having left behind me the threescore years, I am still more convinced, together with most

people, I imagine, of the uselessness of cramming English public schoolboys and other lads with these dead Greek and Latin tongues, not to mention ancient history and geography. Why do we give these matters first place, to the neglect of really useful modern languages, geography, and, to be up to date, chemistry, electricity, and other sciences? This is a reflection which will occur to the thinking man who has long quitted the old groove sacred to certain headmasters and professors.

It is true that had I learnt Latin "as she is taught," I might have conversed in a broken sort of way with my student, but certainly could not have entered into the intricacies connected with artificial flies, rivers, fish, and the hundred and one matters connected with the art of angling. No, I did not want Latin, and never shall, so I just called in my Norwegian Olaf and the conversation became general and interesting, for the student was a keen fisherman, and kindly told me of several fishing resorts, specially mentioning the names of two situated on the same river, Løsset and Diset, in Aarmot. These places lay to the south-east, whilst I was going towards the Romsdal, but I determined to take them afterwards. So to Lesje I proceeded, arriving at the little inn late one evening.

The girl who was preparing my supper that night spoke a little English, and in the course of conversation I asked her to recommend me a simple Norwegian book with an interesting story which I might attack with the help of a dictionary, and so learn a few words. On thus hearing my wants she did not hesitate, but placing her hand on my shoulder to emphasize her words, whilst I was eating my ham and eggs—

"Listen!" she said. "I will lend you the best

book that ever was written—a true story written by the Röver himself. He stole things all his life, chiefly from the rich farmers, and gave most to the poor, and he wrote beautiful verses about his sweethearts—he had ten, you know. The book is called *Gjest Baardson*, Hans Levnetslöv, and there is his picture in irons, poor fellow.” And she ran off and got me the book.

I made out enough that evening to see that I should get interested in it, as I spelt it out, and next day bought it from the young woman. That book lasted me for several months, and certainly taught me a bit of the language. Being a true story, and written in simple style by the highwayman himself, it fascinated me sufficiently to make me wish to return to it, and in other parts of Norway if sport from one cause or another was bad, there was the pleasant feeling that I could always return to my lodgings and old *Baardson*.

It seems curious that there was a regular unmounted bushranger in Norway, but such was the fact, and I afterwards met more than one who had known him. He carried on the game for years. His escapes from prison during that time showed him to be a man of infinite resource. He ended his days by turning pious, when the king forgave him.

Upon inquiring about the fishing next day, the landlord told me that I should have excellent sport in either of the rivers falling out of Lesje lake, one of which flowed north, the other south. These streams proved to be full of undersized trout and grayling, and I soon had enough of it. Next morning some beautiful trout running up to a pound in weight appeared for breakfast, and upon my asking where they came from, the owner of the inn wagged his head skyward,

and evidently did not wish to particularise, but this allusion to the fjelds towering overhead was enough. I soon found a herd-boy, and pulling out my Amt map commenced reading out loud the names of lakes on the fjeld, implying in my best Norwegian that I wished to fish in the one that held the largest trout. The lad soon stopped me, and repeated a name I had just pronounced. The rest was easy; I gave him a small present of silver bits, and in three hours' time he had conducted me to the shore of a good-sized lake. No one was there, but nets were hung out to dry, and finding a boat lying on the strand we took the loan of it. This proved to be a fair rising lake, and I got trout up to a pound weight resembling in shape those I had at breakfast. Moving to another lake, which the boy knew of and which I was glad to see was ill adapted for netting, I got such good sport from the banks, that I lengthened my stay in the valley and paid it two or three more visits. Doubtless all this country has long since been fished out, but the moral I wish to convey is, Do not omit to take your Amt maps with you, they only cost a few pence each, and the other book for your library should be a small one of phrases only. I found the best one to be "Bennett's Selection of Phrases," which gives the English phonetic spelling, and to my mind pronunciation is the important part of any language.

If one does not pronounce the words correctly the Norwegian farmer will make nothing of your remarks, or perhaps, with an honest endeavour to please, may give you information which turns out correct enough, but is not that which you are seeking. This phrase book will not help one much in sporting matters. For instance, should you wish to ascertain whether there is a good rising lake near, the book would not assist you,

but you could put the question to the farmer, having your map to assist you both, thus:—

ENG. "Do the trout rise to flies in that lake?"

NOR. "*Slaar Örretten i det Vand efter Fluer?*"

ENG. "Is there a boat on the lake?"

NOR. "*Er der Baad i Vandet?*"

ENG. "How far is it to the lake?"

NOR. "*Hvor langt er det til Vandet?*"

Should the answer to this latter query be "two hours," clap on another sixty minutes or you will be disappointed. The mistake is often made of "rushing" these worthy farmers—"jumping down their throats." Remember that I am referring to the countryman who, perhaps, even in these days of travel, rarely sees a stranger other than his own countrymen. In addressing such, do not spring your questions upon them at once, but give them a few seconds to consider you, for they do not possess the quickness of brain of the town-bred man. Commence by saluting them courteously, give them time to ask you questions which will probably take somewhat this form: "What countryman are you?" "How old are you?" "Are you married, and if so, how many?"

These and other particulars they are undoubtedly anxious to know; and you must bear in mind that you are in their country and seeking for sport on their property.

In the Colonies of Australia you come across a house in the bush, the owner of which is quite unacquainted with you. You jump off your horse, give the squatter your name and a few particulars about yourself, when you are told to turn your animal into the paddock, and you receive a truly colonial welcome. At least then treat foreigners with the same civility.



After these bits of moralising I resume the thread of my wanderings. Quitting Lesje, it again took me several days to reach Diset in Aarmot, for as usual I delayed on the way to fish many waters, a waste of time as it proved for the most part, but at length reaching my destination I was well rewarded.

I put up at a log shanty situated on the very bank of the river. Arriving about midday in fine weather, I found the farmer enjoying his siesta before returning to his work in the hay-field. On learning my object in coming, he took down and lit a long pipe, and then for a good half-hour did "sentry go" up and down the long room of the hut, leaving an indelible track on the floor by reason of his expectorations.

He lectured me the whole time concerning the delights of his river, and promised to take me out that evening, and later in the day selected ruddy flies and red spinners from my book which certainly proved undeniable killers. While he held the boat near a bank of rushes, I cast towards the reeds and killed many trout of a good size, strong fighters, some of them running up to 2 lbs.

After two evenings of this sport I moved on to Lösset, and here I not only got large trout but plenty of fine grayling.

It proved to be one of the best rivers I had come across up to this.

Years afterwards I revisited the spot, and found it in the hands of a Norwegian gentleman who seemed to own most of the country about there, for besides letting me fish, he took me hare shooting in his woods.

He received me most kindly. I had learnt by this time to conform to the usages of the country; I was

careful to thank my hosts after every meal according to the pleasant custom: "Tak for mad." He let me fish as much as I liked, yet the trout were by no means such free risers as on my previous visit. One of his tenants died just before my arrival, and I was bidden to the feast which was held in honour of the sad event. The guests possibly thought that I had some share in providing the banquet, for my surprise may be imagined, when at the conclusion each farmer, having first shaken hands with my host, then seized my hand and repeated gravely the same words to me, "Tak for död mands mad," or "Thanks for the defunct's feast."

## CHAPTER III

Fjeld Troutling—Jovial Students—Char River—Jemtland—Thronhjøm—"Crusoe"—Pat and the "Pigs"—A Pointer of no Character—Klöven—Lax elv—Stuffy Quarters—A good old Scot.

FROM Løsset I travelled on to Reendalen, and there secured the services of a guide who knew the mountains, for I wished to get out of the valleys and explore the fjeld rivers and tarns. This young farmer could not speak English, which I was glad of, having by now picked up a little more of the language. His wages were two kroner a day, and he found himself. The map showed him what I was seeking, and we started, each pretty heavily laden. We slept at various sæters, and as the cows were all up in the mountains, butter, milk, cream, and cheese was abundant; sometimes we got potatoes, and always *fladbrød*. Every stream, lake, and pool held trout, but all small fish. Eventually heading up towards Tönset, we came upon a long lake and river running out of it.

Here I did better, the fish running larger in the lake. The river, however, only showed small fish, but in quantities. Had there been a boat on the lake, the probability is that I should have got hold of far heavier trout, judging by later experience of Norway generally. Also I might have known that a boat which I had seen some three miles back could have been sledged over the fjelds, but I missed the chance from inexperience and lack of knowing the language. My guide then

told me that he knew of some small deep holes in a bog holding large trout towards the mountain of Elgepiggen, whose crest we could view in the far distance towering above the fjelds.

This proved to be a long and useless tramp, and when we arrived at the aforesaid pools we found that the nearest sæter was nearly one Norsk mile distant. The big trout were there sure enough, and they took any fly greedily, but proved to be long, black, ugly specimens, which I did not return to their black, boggy holes, as my companion begged them for himself. We were wading in the morasses for hours to get to them from pool to pool, and then a dreary trudge to a miserable hut, where there was little enough to eat. My knapsack contained the last tin of meat, which furnished us with supper.

Later on in these pages I shall refer again to Elgepiggen and the neighbourhood of this fine mountain. Food running short, we made a long day of it on the morrow and arrived at Tönset.

The railway between Christiania and Thronhjøm was not open then, but a good carriage road ran alongside the Glommen.

Here at Tönset I found myself in clover, with plenty to eat and drink and good beds, in a large farm rest-house—and good company too, for several jovial students were in possession of the house when we arrived.

In the evening these formed themselves into a musical party, and sang some enlivening and beautiful choruses. They spoke English for the most part, and after exhibiting some good athletic feats and conjuring tricks, informed me that they would wind up with their national song, and that "it was composed by Rikard Nordraak, a man of deep national feeling, and the con-

necting link between Kjerulf and Grieg in the chain of Norwegian musical art."

The song, I need hardly say, was *Ja vi elsker dette Landet* ("Yes, we Love this Country"), and they certainly gave it with the full strength of the company, and in perfect time and part.

One of these students, a fisherman, advised me to drive to Røros and thence to the head of the Great Fœmund Lake, and thus work up by the way of the Rør elv, or char river, to Rogen Lake. This I managed with the help of my man, who commandeered a boat on the Fœmund, by which we reached the char river. I secured many of these fish, though they did not run large, and on the Rogen Lake we found a sæter, where we put up. The girls there told us that much larger char were to be found in the river quite late in the season. The lakes in the district were full of good fish, with one wreck of a boat amongst them. I killed some fair-sized trout from the banks, but not good enough to induce me to stay. My man and I slept in a hay-loft, and we found matters fairly comfortable, but the mosquitoes were pretty bad. These waters have long since passed into private hands. Returning once more to the high road, I paid off my guide, who had proved a good, honest fellow, and proceeded alone for the Ljusna River, my intention being to work down this for a time and then turn off for the great Swedish lake Storsjö in Jemtland, and so hit off the Meraker railway, which was not then quite completed.

I will merely remark here that I found the Ljusna River swarming with grayling, and killed them up to 2 lbs. weight. So freely did they rise that it became monotonous, but not a trout could I get. The incidents that occurred after I left this river and before I reached the railway I will insert in due course, so will

only mention here that I found my way to Ånn Lake in Sweden, and enjoyed the hospitality of Messrs. Connop and Surtees, who were then fishing those waters at the farm of Klocka. From there I took the railway down to Throndhjem.

There were no swagger hotels at Throndhjem then, and had there been I should not have put up in such establishments where only English is spoken. I found a *privat* hotel, where I had an excellent room and a good rough country girl to wait upon me, who laughed much at the lame efforts I displayed in attempting her language, but certainly made a good guess as to my wishes, for she brought me excellent coffee and *kavringar*, or rusks, at seven every morning, and an enormous wooden tub at eight. My meals I took out, at a first-rate restaurant near the theatre.

My intention was to proceed to Klöven, a stopping-place for steamers on the large island of Senjen, leaving myself free to quit the boat at any other place, or to turn up one of the many fjords by a local boat if so inclined. And so I took passage in the *Jonas Lie*, a snug little boat bound for the North Cape. Upon coming on board I was glad to find an old Irish acquaintance of mine, who, together with the rest of his party, had just come out from England with the intention of obtaining a view of the midnight sun.

An amusing scene occurred as we "fjorted" towards the North Cape. The steamers during those times were not so fully provided as they are now, and the "New Chum" Englishmen on board could not properly tackle the dishes, which however were excellent. But it is a fact that we English do not readily take to anything new or strange, and this perhaps applies specially to matters of food; we must know all about ingredients before attacking a dish.

It so happened that in this case I was the only Englishman on board who knew anything at all about the country, and having to report and pass on the menu earned me a special name in this connection. My Irish friend—I will call him Pat—developed an enormous appetite as we approached the Arctic Circle, and it was constantly, “Crusoe, pass that dish; you reported favourably upon it on the last occasion.” One day our very pleasant mate came thundering into the saloon during the dinner-hour, singled out Pat, tapped him on the shoulder with, “Come on deck instantly and see the pigs.”

“Not for Joe,” replied the Irishman hotly. “Don’t you see I’m tackling the only good thing in yer mess—calf chewed; besides, I’ve had twenty years of pig sorting, and I’ve come to this barren country for fish, not bacon.”

Then the mate, only half understanding the import of these remarks, and fearing he would be too late for the show, shook him, at the same time exclaiming with vehemence—

“You never saw *our* pigs; they are vite pigs.”

“And a damned poor delicate breed they are too,” answered Pat with rising choler. “Do you think I’ve been sick all across the North Sea, and now get no sleep ’cos you’ve got no night with yer moony sun, which is properly in bed in old Ireland, and you want to drag me on deck to see yer bastard pigs. No! Go to—Ballyragget—clear out, or I’ll——”

The mate went hurriedly away with a pained expression on his honest face, and when we at length reached the deck we saw some beautiful snowy white *peaks* receding in the distance.

I should mention that “calf chewed” was Pat’s pronunciation of *kalvkjöd*.

It was during this coasting trip that we witnessed a ludicrous argument between an Englishman and a Norwegian, ending in a violent struggle, in both of which the Norwegian had decidedly the best of it. The Englishman, who for reasons of his own had preferred to settle in Norway, had sold a setter to the Norwegian. The scene of the dispute was at a little inn situated on one of the fjords where the steamer stopped for some hours. Seated there at the small *table-d'hôte* was Pat and company, self, and two or three strangers, besides the two men in question. The following was the conversation towards the end of dinner between the interested parties:—

*Englishman.* "I understood you to say just now that you should call the setter I sold you 'Swindler.' Why?"

*Norwegian.* "Because his master svindled me."

*Eng.* (wrathfully). "Take care, or I'll have you in prison. The dog is a famous one, but you are a fool."

*Nor.* "He is an infamous one, and you are a *svinpels*."

*Eng.* "What the devil's that? But don't the dog point?"

*Nor.* "What is point?"

*Eng.* "Why, of course, lift his leg when he smells the birds."

*Nor.* "Yes, he do; but never for birds! It is like this—" and the Norwegian proceeded to show us by pantomime wherein lay the peculiar characteristics of his purchase.

Roars of laughter greeted this scene, and Pat yelled out to the Englishman—

"Begorra, you'd better refund, me boy, and take yer dog back."

This was too much for the dealer, and livid with



fury he went for the Norwegian, but the latter, a powerful and cool-headed man, whom we heard afterwards was a good hunter into the bargain, avoided the blows aimed at him, gripped his adversary, and was bending him backwards across the edge of the dining-room table, when others found it time to interfere, or the man's back would have been broken. We were told that the Englishman's record was a bad one, and that he deserved all he got. However, it ended by his returning the money, taking back the dog, which was a useless old beast, and we left the late antagonists *skaaling* each other over a bottle.

During the few minutes in which the steamer stopped at Florö I heard of a lax river—for so it was described by a native of the village—which emptied itself into the head of the fjord. I made a note of this stream at the time with a view to sampling it some day, and may just as well remark here that half these so-called salmon rivers are merely sea-trout streams up which a grilse might ascend during a flood.

Arriving at Klöven I bid good-bye to my companions and our jovial little skipper, who laughingly told me that now "Crusoe" was gone he should keep the rest of his companions from shooting eider ducks. The fact being that I had purchased a small-bore rifle in Thronhjelm, and we had amused ourselves during the light nights in potting aquatic birds from the bows of the ship, not knowing that by so doing we were breaking the laws.

At Klöven I sought the Lendsmand's house. He made me most comfortable, and upon my innocently producing a fine piece of smoked English bacon, said he had long yearned for such, and would not charge me anything for my board. At every meal this was placed upon the table, and attacked and eaten by the

whole family just as it was, my host taking the lion's share. I followed suit, but at length, seeing some two or three pounds only left, insisted on packing the remnant up, my intention being to make a little trip into the country.

So one day I set out with a lad as guide to visit the Lax elv, which I heard belonged entirely to the Lapps. Said the Lendsmand, "Plenty of salmon there, and fish as much as you like." Here again, in conversing with this old gentleman and others, language failed me. Had I been able to "riddle his chat," as my Irish friend would have said, I should not have undertaken this long and wearisome tramp. I stopped here and there on the track whenever a rude hut or sæter of any sort presented itself, and shot and fished by the way, killing a few trout, also ryper, ruffs, and reeves, and came across some good-sized flocks of a small curlew, *smaa spove* in Norwegian. These latter birds were feeding on the inland marches; I bagged many of them, and they were even superior to the ryper in flavour. My bag also included ptarmigan. The river, when we eventually reached it, proved to be netted and trapped from source to mouth.

The Lapps were civil enough, but as they utterly declined to let any portion of the water, and also said that it partly belonged to a company, I took no further interest in the matter. Salmon they had in abundance; besides catching them every day, they showed me many barrels of salted fish, and fine big fellows they were. They gave me leave to fish as much as I liked, but the season was passing away, and I meant trying the mainland in the same latitude before returning home.

A night spent in one of their larger skin tents was enough. Of mosquitoes there were none, nor any

other insects, for the smoke would have killed every living thing but human beings. The fire smouldered in the middle of the earthen floor, while the smoke passed out partly through a small hole in the upper portion of the tent. When sleeping-time came I crawled through the one slit in this and found, on striking a match, a lair or bed of "senna" grass, which was scattered on the ground on one side of the fire. This I had been told was my "night quarter," prepared by the forethought of Mrs. Lapp.

The smoke was somewhat stifling, but I went to sleep comforting myself that here, at all events, was space and privacy.

I was rudely awakened! A heavy body seemed to fall on my ribs, and I struck out and hit what felt like a bale of skins. This unfortunate blow evolved loud cries from what proved to be a young Lapp; turning over to feel my way out I fell on to another, then tripped over an old woman, to judge by her squeals, and then in despair struck a match.

By this dim light I counted up to ten men, women, and children. The atmosphere was atrocious, reeking, not of clean smoke, but with a sickening smell of melting grease. The first boy who was the cause of this general awakening was still howling, so a Lapp jumped up and threw him bodily out of the tent. Not having taken my clothes off I followed, got my rod, went down the river and killed a grilse. This heartened me up a bit, and returning to the camp my guide met me.

At my suggestion he sought the head man and we had a sort of palaver.

The latter told me that he was sorry, as he had heard that my night's sleep had been disturbed. I did not tell him, because words failed me, that cow-

girls and hay were much sweeter to sleep with, but showed him that I would like to buy the salmon I had caught and take it with me, as I was departing that day to Gibostad. The old chief insisted on making me a present of the fish, and we shook hands and parted.

Having reached Gibostad after a very swampy and rocky walk, my guide said he would wait there for the next coasting boat which would take him to Klöven, whilst I chartered a fine sturdy sailing skiff and ran across with a fair wind to the mouth of the Reisen River—not to be confounded with the large and long one of that name, which is known as the Nor Reisen, and lies within the Arctic Circle.

Here, at the tiny settlement of huts which lies at the mouth of the river, I met a good old Scotchman, who had been all his life in the country and was the carpenter of the district. In spite of his having forgotten much of his native tongue, I learnt a good deal concerning the district and people, also about the river itself, which he described as a poor one for salmon: they were barred by a foss which was situated a short distance from the mouth from ascending farther. I found ultimately by exploration that the Scotchman's description was true in every respect. It was indeed grand to get information from one's own countryman; besides, I was enabled to procure many little comforts, good food and sleeping quarters, owing to his goodwill.

For these reasons I stayed nearly a week in the small farmhouse he had provided me with. During the evenings he would come in after his day's work to hear Scotch airs and hymns played on the concertina. The old man would sit for hours with his head buried in his great gaunt hands listening to tunes which he

had not heard since he left his native land. It was quite pathetic to watch him, and there was but little chat on these occasions, for at the best he could only speak in a whisper. Some years previous to my meeting him he had had a large goitre removed from his throat; this was the only time I met with a case of the hideous malady in Norway.

The river proved to be no good, though I got plenty of moderate-sized sea-trout, and in any case it was the end of the fishing season, and so I retraced my steps to England.

## CHAPTER IV

Angling—Rent Reisen Salmon River—Rafting—Awkward  
Chasms—Mollisfoss—Reisen Watershed and its Char Stream  
—A Novel “How-d’ye-do”—A Brace of Real Sporting Lakes  
—A Grand Char—The Forest Fire—A would-be Tenant.

FOR the next two or three seasons I explored the sea front both north and south; and though the experience was pleasant enough, I did but little, for this coast of Norway is so broken up and intersected with deep fjords that the season seemed to pass before I had done more than a small district. Yet in three seasons one can get in a visit to most of the principal rivers—a flying visit—learning little beyond the name of the place and the habits of the fish frequenting the waters as told by the farmers on the spot. Here and there I would stay for a day or two, and always had a good time, as I gradually picked up more of the language. There were no agents then; fishing for a casual visitor like myself was free, and many a good salmon I had on the coast, fishing by myself and gaffing my own fish.

These were the days when one could pick up old silver curios at many of the inland or coast farms at very reasonable prices.

In order to render my descriptions more continuous with regard to districts and people, I shall to a certain extent ignore the exact order of my wanderings in search of sport. It is obvious, however, that this would not invalidate any little “tips” which might be offered later on in the matter of trout and char fishing.

I will, however, first touch upon salmon fishing in a river, which called forth a certain portion of one's powers of endurance and perseverance.

Without exaggeration, I may say that I have fished most of the rivers in my time, from the Lax elv in the Porsanger fjord (Professor Landmark informed me lately that this river has been taken by an Englishman), thence following the coast round the North Cape, and so south, and eventually turning east to the Mandal. The Lax and Stabors rivers, both running into the Porsanger fjord, I fished by permission of the sea-coast Lapps, men of rude and independent bearing, very different to the fjeld Finns. Both these rivers were full of huge salmon, together with some grayling.

I sought during these wanderings that which most of us have looked for—namely, a medium-sized river which can be fished from either bank. Several of these I was told of by the natives, which contained lax, but the lax too often turned out to be sea trout.

During the early eighties I decided to take the Nor Reisen River, situated a few degrees south of 70° N. latitude, and was able to secure the eight Norske miles from the Norwegian Government at a yearly rental of £10. Two Englishmen had fished this river before, one of whom I knew well; others had been there in remote times. After my first acquaintance with the Reisen, I happened to meet at Christiania the late Mr. Metcalf, author of "The Oxonian in Norway." Answering his question as to where I hailed from last, I told him from the river Reisen, and that I fancied my rod was amongst the early ones on those waters.

"I fished it in '42," was his quiet remark, and I took a back seat.

From my journal, I take the following respecting salmon fishing, and rafting in the Arctic Circle.

My wife accompanied me during the seasons I spent on the Reisen, and certainly roughed it as she never had before.

In 1880, having reached the mouth of the river in a sailing boat from Skjervö, we were poled up in long canoes the sixty English miles to our hut, each canoe with two polers costing £1 for the entire distance. There is only a bridle track up the first few miles of the river, and after that chaos. Twice had we to tent before reaching the hut or house-pool. On my way thither I managed to kill a couple of grilse, much to the joy of the Quains. These fat fish were a pleasant change in our commissariat. We had carried over with us from England a cask of slightly salted beef from the family butcher, and many scores of eggs preserved in lime. These two substantial forms of food proved such a success, that we "repeated the order" on all subsequent visits to this river.

I will now attempt to describe the pools shortly. Their names at the period were as follows. Commencing at the top, and leaving out two or three casts in which I did but little, the first good pool was named by a friend who had fished there previously, "Swimming Bath Pool," and so dropping down stream, came next "Emo," "Top foss," "Avojok Strok," "Alum," then the hut; "Nostnees," "Surasuada," "Mota," "Vomadaga," "Mollisjok," "Dissadage," and then on the north bank a Government hut, politely known as "Government House."

After many years' experience of the angle in different parts of the world, I can truly say that during my seasons on the Reisen, these waters, specially in the upper gorges, called for all one's little dodges to



get the fly properly on the water. Other flies there were in millions, constituting an everlasting swarm day and night; only towards the end of the season, when the midnight sun disappeared, did these pests commence to ease off.

The first pool which we tried, but which proved to be "no catch," we found under the great foss, after some three English miles of climbing, chiefly over rocks, from the hut. To gain it we had to descend the shelves of the precipice by means of a succession of rotten old ladders. This pool could only be fished by raft, so the Quains went to the heights on the south side of the river, cut dead fir trees and hurled them down; having in this way procured sufficient logs, they descended and fastened them together with shoots of birch which had been passed through the fire to render them tough and twistable. The raft being completed, coffee was brewed as usual and our vessel launched.

It carried three of us fairly well, and we crept into the chasm, drawing ourselves along by clawing the side of the precipice. We tried to fathom this black and gloomy pool, but a fifteen foot pole would not bottom. We saw no salmon, but small char kept rising at the fly.

I never did anything in this cellar of a place, and afterwards gave it up. It was no place for salmon.

The next pool was reached by clambering over gigantic rocks. This could be fished from a platform of solid rock above it. It was a small pool some ten yards across by thirty long, on one side a sheer precipice, on the other also a precipice, of earth, and one that could be negotiated either way. Here in this "Swimming Bath Pool" salmon of all sizes might



THE REISEN CANOE



ÖVRE FOSS, RHINE RIVER



be seen any day lying side by side, being plainly visible by peering over the edge into a shallow gut.

At the head of this pool was a gigantic boulder, and upon hooking a fish at this upper part your companion had to climb this rock and pass the line over. If a fish left this water and went into the rapids below, more of these boulders had to be negotiated. The roar of the waters prevented the voice being heard, but by means of quick wits on the part of the Quains the fish was usually secured. If a fish dropped far down this rapid it was lost, as sheer precipices on both sides prevented further following. The black walls reared themselves over 800 feet above the torrent. A year afterwards we got round this difficulty by means of iron spikes driven into the rock and supporting a rude platform of saplings.

Below these precipices stretched a long and placid pool called "Top Foss." This was also usually full of fish, with one special taking spot, a partly submerged reef of rocks on the south side. From that one reef I took seven salmon during an evening's fishing, weighing over 50 lbs. There were many diminutive salmon in those upper waters. Then came a sharp, rocky, and noisy pool, "Avojok," a sure find, where the fly might be dropped over into the dark waters as they surged round rocks 15 feet under you, without wielding the rod. In this manner did my wife, upon the only occasion on which she ever tried, kill unaided a 15-lb. fish. A long stretch of mild cataracts follow, and we come to the house or hut pool. From this downwards are eight or ten pools to Mollisjok. I frequently went down the whole distance, to be poled back the same night.

At Mollisjok a whole river falls over the mountains into the main stream, forming when in spate one of the

D

grandest fosses I have seen, whose roar could be heard up or down the river for miles.

I take the following from my friend Mr. Arthur Guillemard's "Great Waterfalls of the World." He says:—

"I may fittingly wind up this chapter with an account of a Norwegian waterfall, of which I have never seen any mention in any of the numerous works on the country. For its description I am indebted to a lover of Norway and its wild scenery, Mr. E. B. Kennedy, who had the fishing on the *Reisen*, which falls into the small fjord of that name a little to the north of Tromsø, some few years ago. About fifty miles up the river, the *Mollisjok*, a large mountain torrent, forms the fall in question, the *Mollisfos*. The *Reisen*, which is a long series of rapids throughout most of its course, here runs between lofty cliffs in a gorge, and on its northern side the *Mollis* precipitates itself over an almost vertical cliff from a height of about 500 feet into a rocky pool, whence it foams over a short rapid into the main river. When the *Reisen* is in flood the falling column of water drops directly into it, and thus the effect of the plunge is much intensified. About 45 feet below the crest the foaming waters impinge on a huge black rock, and then reuniting, plunge down some 450 feet more in a superb sheet to the foot of the precipice. The fall is described as a very grand one, and its roar is re-echoed for a long distance down the river. Its height is about the same as that of the *Vöringfos*, but its volume under ordinary conditions is considerably smaller. However, Mr. Kennedy tells me that the *Vöringfos* when at low water did not strike him as so grand as the *Mollisfos* in flood. And those who know how superb a fall the lion of the *Hardanger* is even at the end of a dry season, can judge from this that the little-known fall in the far North is well worthy of mention. But my friend adds a word of warning: 'In your description of the *Mollisfos* let the mosquitoes darken the page; they are simply awful. Send your worst enemy to see the fall, if he will go, but keep out of his way if he lives to come back.'

It was near the *Mollisjok* that I experienced my best day's fishing that season.

I had started by myself at three o'clock one morning, having sent the two Quains down stream some

hours previously to pick up the post at Government House. By the light of the midnight sun I waded the river just above Avojak, and so got round the back of the precipices on the north side, then coming to the boulder on the top of the cliff crept under it as usual and descended the steep earthen slope to Swimming Bath Pool. Here I "put up," for this was the very bit of water to ring the changes on, in the shape of some dozen different sorts of tiny double-hooked flies. Moreover, after killing or losing a fish here, it was advisable to rest the pool for a bit—so clear and so confined were the waters. Upon cautiously lying down and peering over the edge of the rocks there were my friends as usual in their favourite quarters; so I collected some drift-wood and put the quart pot on the fire for tea.

The scene was weird but thrilling. Above were lights on the mountains like a pale but sweet London fog. The pool below almost entirely in shadow. No sign of bird or animal life, but at my feet, and up and down the chasm, roared the angry waters. Whilst these were in shadow I killed five salmon and grilse. The largest salmon, weighing 17 lbs., gave me the most trouble, for it is not an easy pool to gaff your fish in single-handed; luckily, when he did leave the place I was able to get at him, dead beat as he was, before the rush of waters had rolled him to where the cliff came down precipitously into the water.

Naturally one's object was to kill every fish in the pool itself—a somewhat difficult feat—and in bright weather the place had to be fished on fine tackle.

I had a rather unpleasant experience during the morning in question. For I got drunk! Yes, drunk on tea! The fact was I had started with only a biscuit or two in my pocket, and becoming hot and somewhat

exhausted after the death of each fish, I had retired to my camp-fire to rest the pool and myself, indulging at the same time in copious drinks of black tea. There is no doubt that I had thrown in handfuls of leaf in an absent-minded manner. By the time I had killed my last fish I had got the "jumps," and feared approaching the overhanging edge of the torrent. Furthermore, I doubted my powers of surmounting the ascent behind me with rod and fish on my shoulders, so hiding my spoil well under the rocks, and so safe from fish-hawks, took my rod and experienced an ascent which was not entirely a matter of joy. However, once on the fjeld I felt better; re-forded the river, gained my hut, had breakfast, and proceeded with the two Quains, who had meantime arrived, down stream to "Mota Suanda" within sound of the sullen booming of Mollisfos.

Here on a tiny double-hook Jock Scott I killed a cock fish, after seventy minutes' play, of 38 lbs. A little later I secured the hen, from exactly the same spot, weighing 30½ lbs., and was lucky enough to have her on the steel-yard in forty minutes, and finished up with three sea-char of 2 lbs. each. The brown trout were always plentiful if one spun for them, but only on very special occasions did I ever try for these. Seven fish weighing about 109 lbs. would be a mere beginning of sport on some rivers, but in those days nearly every Reisen fish attacked and subdued under the difficulties which prevailed was a victory.

I say little about being let down a precipice by means of a rope tied under my arms, because I was beaten at this mode of fishing. One Quain would "play" me as I clung to a ledge, and if I hooked a fish the other man would have to make a long détour for the canoe to come below and gaff him, by which



GORGE IN REISEN RIVER



MOLLISFOSS, REISEN RIVER  
TAKEN DURING A DRY SEASON





time the salmon was far away or round a corner and no means of following him. By the time I was hauled up my clothes were saturated from the drip of the cliffs.

There were plenty of ducks, long-tailed ones chiefly, and ryer on the fjelds and tarns lying to the south side of the river, which I frequented most with the gun. I also shot a few 'cailie and black game. But my love of exploring caused me usually only to take things as they came, and not to delay after winged game. I was anxious to find the watershed of this river. I say "find" it, because the Quains knew nothing connected with its source. One day I had ascended to a high peak overlooking these upland waters on the chance of finding ptarmigan, and to bring down a supply of "sleuk" (or *Angelica*) to the valley. After some three hours' climbing, the Lapp who accompanied me, and who spoke Norwegian, exclaimed, pointing with his hand towards the East, "There are the fjelds of Russia, and there lies the Reisen lake."

Up to this period I had no idea that the lake which feeds this great river could be seen from the fjeld on which we were standing. The Lapp continued, "No one has been to that water, at least no stranger, but an old Lapp and his wife live there and eat the fish."

From where we stood, many thousand feet above the great foss, this lake appeared to be some ten miles off, thus making it seventy miles or more from the source of the river to its mouth.

That lake we determined to get up to the following day, and to fish some of the ten miles above the foss, up which no salmon could possibly ascend.

Therefore, on the morrow, provided with gun and

trout rod, we started. What a charm there is in wandering along the bank of a river which had never been trodden, save by a wandering Lapp in search of some of his strayed deer, waters, moreover, which had all the appearance of a lovely trout stream.

For several miles we were able to walk along the sandy margin of the glittering stream, save that now and then the perpendicular rocks standing sheer up from the water obliged us to make a *détour* into the forest, and yet it was not often that the Lapp would thus lose time; the way he could walk up smooth boulders was wonderful. Nothing of special interest occurred during our tramp, for I had not put the rod together. Once we disturbed a hen 'cailie with her brood of squeakers, and then we came upon the print of a heavy beast's foot in the sand; my companion said it was a "Gaup" or "Glutton." Some weeks later I saw this beast in the flesh. The Lapp told me that it could eat a whole reindeer at a "sitting."

After following the margin of the stream, and sometimes taking short cuts through the forest for some hours, we arrived at a bed of reeds which proved to be the far outlet of the lake. So far we had stayed neither to hunt nor fish, but amongst these reeds and swamps the presence of wild ducks caused delay, until a few brace were secured and hung on to a tree to await our return.

The reports of the gun at length brought into view the sole occupants of this wild waste, the hermit Lapp and his wife, both wizened old people. The meeting between my companion and these lake dwellers was both pathetic and peculiar; the woman was taken no notice of, but the two men sat down alongside each other, extended each an arm round the other's waist,

and fixed a long and steadfast gaze on each other's dirty faces. This ceremony over, the usual "how-d'-y'-do" on such occasions, we were conducted to the *gamme* or hut and regaled on fried char and rye-bread, pipes were lit, and conversation ensued between the Lapps. Not understanding their language I signified my intention of fishing the lake.

"But he has not a boat," said my Lapp. "He lays his nets from a raft, says the trout and char are in the deeps and only come inshore in the autumn."

The sequel proved he was right, the man punted his raft about—nothing would rise but small char outside a bed of reeds, and no trout. But had I not the lovely-looking trout stream to fish on my homeward journey. Darkness under the midnight sun was not, and in the weird light I caught or missed char every cast. Many big fellows were there who evidently made the river their home; lake flies they took greedily, and soon my bag was filled with lovely crimson-bellied fish, many of 1 lb. weight, some up to 2 lbs. I may mention that my steel-yard was always with me during my Scandinavian experiences; casual statements concerning weights are not worth attending to. These char in the bloom of health and literally in the pink of condition gave but little sport, but we were fishing for the pot—for the Lapp's pot—for he begged me to go on and he would bring me double the weight of reindeer meat. He had a heavy string of the same fish on a willow wand, and at length I wound up, else one felt inclined to go on like the brook for ever, so calm and beautiful was it wading silently amongst these rocks and stickles; but the little Lapp had many miles to go to his camp over the fjelds after reaching my hut, so we proceeded home.

But apart from its salmon fishing, this upper valley of the river would not be without interest to the geologist, for in past generations the waters had flowed in a different bed. Running parallel to the foss and its pools there was another deep ravine strewn with gigantic boulders, while one could also see the undoubted spot where the original foss had roared over a chasm like the existing channel in all respects, and following this gulf one could see where the mountain had fallen, blocked up and bridged over the ravine.

It was with a curious feeling that one paused and viewed this silent witness of the past, this ghost of a foss, this spirit of wild waters, which had once rushed in a maddened turmoil along the boulder-strewn channel, until suddenly stopped, thrown back to where we know them in their present vigour—the one a silent, the other a living witness of the works of the Creator.

As is the case in all rivers, there were days, and many of them, when salmon declined to rise to anything—days of brilliant sunshine, hot and breathless. At first I thought that under these conditions they might be tempted to look at a fly under the weird light of the midnight sun, but soon gave this up, for they seemed to be—as all nature—asleep. Then we would take our tents and sleeping bags and drop some forty miles down the river to where the valley broadened out to a mile or so in width.

A much more suitable and cheery district for my wife. Instead of being shut in by the gloomy cliffs of the upper waters, she could here accompany me during easy excursions to the neighbouring lakes, returning every evening to our tent, which was pitched close to "Sappen," the one good farm of the district.

Here, where the valley was broad and pleasant and

open to the four winds of heaven, on the banks of a little stream which connected one of the lakes with the river proper, we made our camping-ground for days. Up this little tributary we would pole our canoe, or draw it under the overhanging bushes, till we found ourselves floating in the first lake. Plenty of fine, lusty sea-trout we killed in this water, nothing under 2 lbs., one over 5 lbs., all taken by spinning; a fly they would not look at. This was a sporting lake, full of duck, and a fine show of spoil we turned out on the sandy shore.

There was another lake quite convenient to the sea-trout one, but not connected with it, which I stumbled across whilst shooting, and where big fish were sucking in flies under the banks. Said the Quain, as I pointed to a great quivering circle in the water, "Damook."

This highly suggestive name was his term for brown or "fjeld" trout, and as fish were soon rising over the whole pool, a raft was prepared. Dead trees were handy, men were willing, and in a couple of hours' time was launched a lovely cruiser, with a platform suitable for a theatre stage and a pair of huge, rough oars on outriggers.

Now here was fishing made easy. My wife then stepped aboard the gallant craft with one man to move it gently about. She soon hooked on a dark loch fly, a fish that was able to perceptibly move the raft. This grand fellow was, I think, the most lovely picture of a fish I had seen that year, with its crimson belly, silver sides, and tiny head—a char of 5 lbs. Old friends from the English north "countree" used to eye me doubtfully when I spoke in previous years of char up to 3 lbs., their experience relating to half-pounders or potted herrings. In vain I told them that I carried a steel-yard and used it honestly. Then here was the

chance of proving the existence of such fish ; so we pickled him and brought him home. Many good char and trout we captured in this lake. My wife wrote and illustrated an article upon it for *Outing* at the time.

With all its ups and downs—and there were some of the latter—I look back to the seasons spent in the Reisen valley as amongst the best I have had in Norway for all-round sport with rod and gun. Of luxuries there were none. I lived chiefly on salmon—a fish I am never tired of. I also exchanged this fish with the Lapps for reindeer meat ; we smoked and kippered a fair number besides. Small vegetables I always try to grow when settled for any time at a place, but was completely beaten in these endeavours when I sowed some seeds near the hut. Mustard and cress, lettuces and radishes, would grow about an inch and then stop altogether. I experienced the same result every season.

One season I burnt down my hut and many miles of the Government forest. The sun was so powerful that year that the lichen mosses and leaves of the forest were burnt. The turf roof of the hut was like tinder, and engaged as I was in cooking a special stew of all sorts one day, I did not at first notice smoke coming through the neatly boarded ceiling. The iron pipe of the little cooking range had fired the roof. Everything was down flat in an hour, and we only saved a few articles.

Camping in our tent that night close to the water of the river, we heard the cartridges exploding in regular volleys. The forest fire was a magnificent sight, and it lasted off and on for a week.

A new hut was ready for us on the old site, by the time we arrived on the ensuing season. Drawbacks I

suppose there were to the river. One year I advertised it. Amongst the applications in answer came one inquiry:—

“How many servants slept in my house? How far off was the nearest church, post-office telegraph, doctor, butcher, steamer, and washerwoman?”

I answered that the log hut took care of itself; nearest church, Kautokimo (service twice a year, so the Lapps informed me); post-office, sixty miles; doctor a hundred; butcher, the nearest Lapp who possessed reindeer; washerwoman—well, I told my correspondent that he could do as I did, hang his shirts in a brook close to the hut with big stones on them, and turn them next morning. All this was *absolutely* true, but when I so informed my inquirer he wrote back to say that “it was an ungodly hole, and that he did not appreciate that sort of chaff.” I replied that I was not going into matters of theology with him, and that, being a follower of natural religion, the absence of a church did not strike me in the same light. That my statements were true I had ample witnesses to prove, but that all things considered, he had better not come to Norway at all. And there the matter ended.



## CHAPTER V

Sundry Salmon Rivers—Derby Day on the Örkla—Fight with an Elk Hound—A “Shoddy” Stream—Our “Vikings”—The Seakings save the Situation.

WITH the exception of the Reisen River there were no very special incidents in connection with salmon streams which I sampled.

And after all most wielders of the rod can salmon fish more or less, and there is little to be learnt of the art after the first few seasons' experience; whereas in trouting, certain periods occur when the fish though feeding freely are most “cussed,” and defy in Scandinavia the man even of Test and Itchin.

I will now touch lightly upon four salmon rivers, omitting all others south of the Örkla, though I have worked them more or less right round to and including the Mandal.

I once wandered up the valley of the Maalselv; the salmon river was occupied, but my object was to search for some trouting waters which I had been told of by my friend Mr. Jacob. These were situated some distance inland, and proved to be well worth the journey, the trout being plentiful, running large, and taking the fly well.

The Stryn River in the Nord fjord I fished before even it was rented, and I have been there many times since with friends. A peculiarity about this river is that there occurs a fortnight every season when the salmon absolutely refuse to rise; and it contains one pool—Hoopers—at its head, which is a very awkward

one to fish. Upon the few occasions on which I attacked it I did nothing, but I have seen my brother take some beautiful salmon out of it with prawn. He describes his system of fishing this pool in his latest work, "Sport in the Navy and Naval Yarns."

The Namsen I have fished on several occasions during my trips to our elk forest situated at the watershed of that river.

No wielding of the rod is necessary here, a small schoolboy will hook as many fish as an old hand. I killed some good salmon in the Stjördal upon a day of sad memory, that of the sinking of H.M.S. *Victoria*. I happened to be guest of the late Admiral Fairfax, in the *Royal Sovereign*. The squadron was lying at Thronhjem. The admiral, his flag-lieutenant, and myself proceeded by rail to the river. The salmon were taking freely that day, the former had just killed a 22-lb. fish, with a fly of my own invention, called the "Black Cockatoo," and one of us at all events was engaged in playing a fish when the woeful news arrived. We could not credit it, but our leader telegraphed home for confirmation, when it proved to be all too true, and we returned—a sad trio—straight on board.

The Gula I have also fished on several occasions, and once rented a small portion of it, in the days of the dollars; but, as every one knows, this water is a bit of a lottery owing to its poor watershed.

I have known the valley of the Örkla from early days, have rented stretches of both its upper and lower waters for a few dollars, neither of these portions being then worth having. Many of the lakes above this valley have afforded me good sport, and either alone or with others I have rented portions of its woods and fjelds. Some of the best all-round shooting I ever had

in Norway was in these woods with C. Parker, who then owned the Grut water with that first-class veteran of the rod, H. Symonds. I have an old contract of the Garlid shooting, in an adjacent valley, and the variety and quantity of the game was something to be remembered. In later years I re-visited this Örkla River with my wife and children, and I mention this because of two little incidents, one consisting of the fact that I was tangled up in a dog fight, and the other that I secured a fish against all hard-and-fast rules ; for by this time, as upon many other rivers, the boatman had the audacity to take command and order about the Englishman.

But I must commence with the salmon struggle, before going on with the dog fight. It was Derby Day. So far little or nothing had been done on the river, and I had fished my pools over without a rise. At length the rower pulled ashore and we had our lunch. I may mention that this boatman was a "sigher," a name I have long since invented for the man who rows unwillingly, as evinced by the protracted sighs he emits.

I remarked whilst resting on the bank that there was one small hole, which I pointed out, and which we had not fished. "That," he answered, "no one ever fishes, no fish ever dwells there, I would not even trouble to row to it ; besides, the river is too high for that spot." If he was determined, so was I, and gained my point by threatening to report him. Very sulkily he rowed to the spot, a small triangular-looking hole, and I was quite prepared to fish it blank and then hear, "I told you so !"

However, I at once hooked a fish, which tore out of this hole right across the whole breadth of the river. That fish eventually took us down three fosses, and, after an exciting fifty minutes' play, was gaffed at the

bottom of the third one, weight 28 lbs. Had it not been that he was hooked foul—in his leathery stomach—the hook must have cut out. On many other occasions I have taken salmon out of holes which were never fished, and ignored by the boatmen. Thus use your own judgment. *Verb. sap.*

Now I have always managed to have a dog of some sort with me in Norway. A savage but faithful bear dog named "Sikker" was my wife's constant guard and companion on the Reisen, and previous to this latest Örkla trip we had bought a gaunt red dog, warranted to tackle a wolf; certainly as a useful reindeer or elk hound he could not be excelled. During the few weeks that he had been in our possession he had shown no signs of vice, though his expression was somewhat surly. One evening he had coiled up under the bed in our farmhouse, and I tried to coax him out into another room, but as he would not come proceeded very gently to snap the chain into the ring in his collar. He had my left wrist in his grip at once. Now I am a great lover of dogs, but if they turn on me for nothing I don't leave them, the insult is so deadly; yet in this case I had much better have treated the brute as, I found out years afterwards, his former master had treated him under similar conditions, *i.e.* fetched him a kick which broke one of his ribs. This act would have enabled me to go on fishing; as it was, I had to leave the valley next day for Thronhjøm.

We rolled and fought through two rooms; as soon as he freed one hand he would have the other wrist, the hand of which was gripping his windpipe, when my free hand would come into play once more, with little effect, however, upon his muscular, coarse-haired throat.

Having neither knife nor other weapon it was a

long fight, and not until we got on to the stone flags outside the front door did I get a chance to throw him, when with my left thumb well gripped in his fangs, and which he evidently meant to retain, I got him on his side, brought my right knee on to his ribs and felt them go with a crack, when he opened his mouth and a quantity of blood rushed from his throat. He then looked like staying there, so I got my gun and put a ball through his head ; received "first aid" from my wife and the children's nurse, had a good supper, and as soon as possible we got to Thronhjelm, where the elder doctor Kint told me that one of the bites might be troublesome, but that he would "treat them all with the new discovery of my countryman, Lister."

That iodoform certainly saved the thumb. We went home directly afterwards, when I had both arms in slings, and my wife fed me during the passage.

So I lost the best part of the season's fishing. I noticed that this dog never fought for the throat as a kangaroo hound did which once tackled me in Queensland. However, the colonial beast got my arm instead, but I managed to throw him early in the struggle, and got such a prize on the long under jaw that it snapped. Next day his master shot him, and then had the impudence to send me in a bill for damages!

Though I intimated that the Örkla was the most southern river which I should touch upon, I cannot resist devoting a few lines to another—a so-called salmon river—which lay some miles to the south of Egersund, and in the proposed taking of which I was nearly trapped: "Comfortable farmhouse, close to river, hundred yards from the sea ; salmon pass up into the lakes." This and much more was the bait held out by an agent. When my family and myself

reached the farmhouse we found it newly painted. Sleeping in a newly painted room is deadly to me, and so I camped in my tent.

We soon made the acquaintance of a couple of Norwegian fishermen, who kept their large mackerel boat close to our farm. These were fine stalwart fellows with fair beards and blue eyes, and we termed them our "Vikings." They sailed us out in their boats, and we became great friends. They spoke English fairly well, some of it very forcibly, and when the time came they saved the situation for us. The dismal country around consisted of bald hills, and dark, hungry-looking lakes containing a few starved troutlets.

The sea was tideless. The only amusement was collecting sea-birds' eggs, an occupation which afforded delight to my children.

Not a salmon ever ascended the wretched little stream, and all the fish I caught were a few yellow cod and cole fish in the salt water off the mouth of the brooklet.

I suggested that there was nothing to stay for and nothing to pay for, and requested the farmer to produce a horse and cart. Upon several occasions we had noticed this farmer and the agent in earnest consultation, and this request for horse and cart brought matters to a climax. So much was demanded for fishing! and a further sum for painting the farmhouse! My reply was that rent of certain rooms in the house should be paid for, together with a few little matters of milk, coffee, &c., but nothing else.

I found our friendly Vikings mending their nets by the shore, and told them that the farmer had said that there was no horse in the district, and further, that he had hinted that he had received orders to

detain our traps till payment had been made. Upon hearing this the Vikings broke out into such a lurid flow of language against the conspirators that, if words could have effected anything, the latter would at once have been disembowelled and the next moment burnt.

Having thus relieved their feelings, our two allies studied the situation calmly, said that the enemy—and they had old scores to pay off on their own account—no doubt intended to detain our goods until after the local boat had left Egersund, for she was going to sail on the morrow.

“We would have liked to have sailed you round to the port,” they added, “but there is no wind; never mind, have everything ready for a start to-morrow early, and depend upon us.”

Early next morning, whilst engaged packing my tent, I heard a sailor's chanty going on, and looking round a corner of the building, a pleasing sight presented itself—our Vikings dressed in their best clothes, standing one on each side of a pony and cart, and each carrying a long musket over his shoulder. These good fellows had roamed much in their time, and served several voyages in American ships, with the result that they had picked up much language of sorts; but the adjectives which now issued forth were worthy of a Queensland bullock-puncher at his best, and quite recalled old times; this was of course with reference to the enemy, or any one who dared to interfere with us.

I got them out of earshot of the house, as it was hardly fit language for ladies and children, and then heard their plan, which was simply that they would put the whole of our traps, children too, if we liked, on their cart, and escort us with loaded muskets to the steamer.

“And now,” said the elder Viking, “my mart”—*i.e.* my mate—“will seek for the farmer.” Forthwith the younger of the sea-kings proceeded, accompanied with his weapon, to search the out-buildings, but not a male could he find upon the place.

So we proceeded with our escort to the town of Egersund, drawing up at the residence of the English consul. Here, leaving our guard in charge of the baggage, I was received most kindly by our representative, laid the whole facts of the case before him, signed the statement, and left the amount owing to the farmer for provisions.

The Vikings not only saw us to the wharf, but put the whole of our things on board the boat, allowing no one to interfere with them. They richly deserved, and received, a goodly reward; grand specimens of independent, hardy Norsemen, they told us of their home on a salmon river in the south. We visited it later on, and enjoyed some good all-round sport.

*Moral.*—Always make friends with sailors wherever you may be.



## CHAPTER VI

Notes concerning Grayling—No great Ones—"Overlanding" a Hand-cart—A Great Day with *Thymallus*—A Hideous Pike—The Mayfly—A New Shrub.

I NOW turn to grayling and trout fishing.

I mention *Thymallus* before my favourite trout, because, so to speak, I wish to get rid of him. Not that he has not afforded me good sport and excellent eating, for he is in the pink of condition on the upland streams during July and August, but because this fish has absolutely ruined many of the smaller rivers in Norway, several of which I could name, where during the 'seventies I have killed nothing but trout, or rather perhaps thirty trout to one grayling; long since have these same waters developed into grayling runs pure and simple.

I leave to naturalists to answer the question why this should be. Certain it is that with regard to these rivers I have long since deserted them, for not a trout is left, whilst during a late visit I found immature grayling swarming in every pool. In my opinion, many wrong statements are made with regard to this fish. I have seen it stated in print that his mouth is most delicate, and therefore he should be handled with the greatest care. My experience is that his mouth is as tough as leather, and by putting a fairly heavy strain upon him he can be soon brought to bag, for his fight is of the feeblest. Again, it has often been stated in my hearing that many have been killed up to 5 lbs. weight. It may be an audacious remark to

make, but I simply state that I do not believe it without actual and undoubted proof.

My reasons are as follows: I have fished for them for thirty seasons as far north as the rivers running into the Porsanger Fjord, also in Jemtland in Sweden, and throughout the extensive districts around the whole of the great Fœmund Lake, for years.

I never caught during this period, nor have I seen, a grayling over  $3\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., and only once did I kill one as large. I have information from reliable friends who have fished the district through Lulea Lapmark, where runs the railway from Ofoten fjord, and who have followed these rivers down to the gulf; it was there that in former times I heard that monster grayling were captured, but my friends took nothing over 3 lbs. I am confining myself to rod and line fishing.

Then a lady assured me she had killed grayling of 10 lbs. weight in a river which ran into the White Sea. I could not deny this fact, but think that she was forgetting herself, to judge from the accounts which a man gave me who had fished this very river. And now I will tell of the day on which we took the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  lb. grayling.

It was as late in the season as October when my brother and I determined to fish a stream in Tufsingdal which had more than once been mentioned to us by the natives as holding quantities of trout and grayling. During the summer months the fish, they said, ran small, but in the autumn the larger ones, more especially trout, were heading up this river from the lakes. There was no "wheel-road" to the place, so packing a horse with our gear and *manavilins*, we left the farmhouse at which we were staying, and at the end of some five hours' march found ourselves on the shore of a large lake. Here we procured a boat

and rowed ourselves to the mouth of the river, which was not navigable in its lower reaches.

At the point where we landed we found a house and out-buildings, but no inhabitants, the farmer and his family having left for their sæter to cut grass and gather reindeer moss. These valleys being over 2000 feet above the sea no crops were grown, with the exception of tiny patches of corn which never ripened; consequently, this was cut green, and made into hay together with the native grass.

On looking about we discovered a small hand-cart, and packing our traps into this we took it turn and turn about to drag it over the fjeld to our destination, a farmhouse some miles up the river. This proved a somewhat arduous undertaking. We worked for some hours under a broiling sun, towing and lifting our truck over the boulders, till at length, quitting the fjeld for the lower ground, we sought a little recreation in the form of ryper shooting. We had no dog with us on this occasion, but birds were plentiful that season. Delaying over long at this, the gloom of evening overtook us, and we had to abandon our vehicle and hurry along a cairn-marked track whilst light still favoured us. Some two hours more and the murmur of rushing waters greeted our ears, and shortly after we entered the farmhouse, where the usual slow but hospitable welcome was afforded us.

Upon explaining to the farmer that we had left our waggon on the fjeld, and that floating from the upraised shafts was an ensign in the shape of a huge English newspaper, he said, "I will have it before you sleep," and he did; thus enabling us to sort our tackle for the morrow before turning in for the night.

Luck befriended us on this occasion. The river had been low owing to a long spell of dry weather,

but that night, after we had crept under the sheepskins, the rain descended in sheets, and so continued during the whole of the following day. In the morning we donned ulsters, the farmer showed us his boat, and then went off to his grass-cutting.

The river, we found, came from a series of small lakes and fell into the large one we had crossed, running a course of some fifteen English miles. In its upper and middle portions a boat could be used, some management being required amongst the small fosses. The banks were lined with dense scrub. The larger fosses on the lower part were impracticable; these, however, could be fished from the rocky shore.

We started fishing at 10 A.M. and knocked off at 4 P.M., being then so saturated and weighed down by the ulsters that we deemed it advisable to pull back against the rapidly increasing stream.

In that period we killed forty fish weighing 45 lbs. I specially use the word "killed," because we turned back many undersized fish and kelts. We commenced with moderate-sized flies, increasing to grilse and small salmon flies as the waters thickened. Whilst one of us gently rowed the other fished, or in a suitable spot we would drop our stone anchor and both wield the rods. We had a steel-yard with us, but no fish that we happened to take at first drew it up to the pound; yet larger we knew were there, for the farmer had shown us a tub full of fine fellows lying in salt which he had taken in his mesh net a day or two before.

It grew somewhat monotonous this hauling in and returning of small fry, though we kept some of the best of them, as our host had asked us to; when my brother suggested plying the "screwdriver," an utterly new term to me! Presently he drew from his pocket

a neat case which, judging from its outward appearance, might have contained jewels or gems of the first water, and gems the contents proved to us. There, nestling in the recesses of that magic box, reposed gold (?) and silver (?) Cockermouth and Punjaub spoons of every size.

No sooner was one of the first overboard than the fun began, and quickly was the Punjaub sent to join company. We very soon found that if there was not a run literally every couple of minutes, something must be wrong down below. So it always proved—a bit of weed on the triangle. Over the pools which we had carefully fished with the fly we spun these lures, and out of them took noble trout and grayling; 5 lbs. was our largest trout, 3½ lbs. the biggest grayling. Often we had two fish on at a time. At length we heard the big foss booming below us, and though the fish were still taking we turned up-stream for home. The bottom of the boat presented the appearance of a little Billingsgate. All the fish were in perfect condition, and shone with a lovely bloom.

The farmer, good old Eric, was as pleased as we were with the catch, as, salted down, it would help to keep him and his relatives through the winter. It rained continuously all that night, and the next day we found that the clear waters had turned into a yellow torrent. The weather had evidently broken up, and we left the district.

And now for the second largest grayling I ever killed.

I had commenced by fishing the Ljusna elv, that immensely long stretch of pool and foss which, taking its rise in Norway, falls into the Swedish Gulf about latitude 61°. The weather was bad, and seemed likely to last, and it was in a hut south of this river that my worst

detention occurred. Being desirous of trying some lakes which were located beyond roads, I secured the services of a young farmer and his horse, hung my gear on to the pack-saddle, and thus we proceeded across fjeld and swamp until we found ourselves at the head of a large lake. The north wind commenced to blow, and so continued for the best part of two weeks. Being as we were some 2000 feet above the sea, we found this bitter wind unpleasant, and certainly opposed to all fishing. The boat which we had secured was, besides, too old and crank to live on rough waters, and we did nothing; but this old craft acted as a turned-up shelter ashore during the worst storms. To return by the way we had come was undesirable for many reasons, and to get away by any other seemed impracticable owing to the dense scrubs and great rocks by which we were surrounded, rendering it bad travelling for the laden horse. We knew that there were heavy trout in the waters, and one day we managed to get out for a couple of hours during a lull, but with no success as far as these fish were concerned. I had tried every sort of spinning lure, and as a last chance when turning homewards had shifted to one of Carter's "wagtails," put on an extra *Fishing Gazette* sinker—than which there is no handier lead made—and was just thinking of baling out the old craft for about the twentieth time, when a sudden stoppage, for I can call it nothing else, caused me to pull the thick woollen mits off my hands and "stand by." Finding something below moving about in a dignified manner I put on pressure, and presently was revealed to us the gaping red jaws of an enormous pike—the wagtail down his throat and invisible. The gaff had slipped out of sight under the bottom boards of the boat, but the lad Knut said, "Get him to the

side and I'll stick my knife into him." The tackle was new, and the trolling-rod had never before had such a strain put on it. It was several minutes before the monster could be brought alongside. At length an opportunity arrived, the lad plunged his knife into the pike's belly, at the same time I got my fingers into its eyeholes, and heaving together we got it over the gunwale. What this fish weighed we neither knew nor cared. It was a hideous-looking, half-starved thing, its length was 3 feet 4 inches, and its stomach was perfectly empty.

The "house" to which I refer consisted of a log hut scantily furnished, excepting as far as mosquitoes were concerned; these pests had filled it, taking shelter from the cold wind. Some saplings raised off the earthen floor formed our beds, to which we added thick layers of birchen twigs as mattresses. A good substantial log, which afterwards came in useful as fuel, did duty for a table. Of provisions we had ample, but no milk, and we kept a good fire going night and day. Before the north wind had totally dropped, we found a way, and cleared out of this desolate-looking district, finally reaching a brawling rocky stream which swarmed with trout up to herring size. At the rate which we took them—for Knut had also armed himself with a pole—it would be no exaggeration to say that we might have killed a hundred in a full day's fishing, using as we did three loch flies to a cast. Angling of this description suited the native, but grew monotonous, and after a couple of hours thus spent, and finding no big fish, we moved on.

Our next camp was situated amongst a very different class of scenery—on a sharp stream, whose peaty-looking waters and alluvial banks betokened food for

fishes. There were pools of mud and gravel alternating with sharply running stickles; sedge, weed, and rushes everywhere. We found here a couple of good substantial farmhouses, surrounded with water meadows and a luxurious growth of young grass. One morning after a spell of hot sun and southerly breeze down came the fly, at first a few, increasing as the sun rose higher, till the water was dotted with the tiny craft sailing and fluttering along. An occasional one was taken, but as yet the fish, which consisted almost entirely of grayling, had not risen to the occasion.

I may mention here that this was the genuine mayfly. The fact of their being the same as the English insect had been doubted, and some seasons previously I had sent specimens to Mr. R. B. Marston, who pronounced them to be the same insect as the British one. I always find them a bit more ruddy in Scandinavia; the Norwegians call them *Marie flue*. Here we were, then, in the nick of time. The fly was up and the grayling after it, not various-sized fish rising all over the stream, but heavy fellows in apparently established spots, rolling over head and tail, and sucking in the fat-bodied insects. Putting up what appeared to be a very fair imitation of the fly, I mentally pictured some of these thumpers grassed within the next five minutes. Vain thought! Perhaps my specimens were too light in colour for these epicures, but a small woolly-bodied and darker mayfly proved deadly to six grayling before the rise was over; the six weighed 9 lbs., but so far no large ones. Next day I moved to another farm higher up the stream, and killed to the ruddy mayfly, fishing morning and evening, twenty-two fish weighing 20 lbs. So the sport continued, but at length one could see the commencement of the glut,



when dead flies were scorned, and nothing but a fluttering insect taken.

One day I had taken refuge in a log hay hut from a passing squall. Under my feet was a deep backwater covered with fly, chiefly dead specimens and caddis cases. Presently the sun shone out, and a couple of heavy fish commenced rising at long intervals at the edge of this backwater where the stream ran past. Stealing out, I put my fly over the nearest, but he refused it every time. At length I sat down, preparatory to laying a regular siege to this fish. Whilst occupied in turning over the leaves of the "volume" in search of something specially dainty, he rose close to me at a fluttering mayfly. At that instant a large stone fly settled on me. Without getting up I impaled this on the hook, and dropped it in the centre of the magic ring caused by the fish. The grayling at once came up, saw it was alive, leisurely sucked it in, and after some heavy boring was grassed. Weight, 3 lbs. 3 ozs.; length to fork of tail, 19 inches. This, a male fish, was very fat, besides being crammed with a solid black mass of fly and caddis. I tried long for his mate, but unsuccessfully. No trout did I get in this stream over half a pound. Their flavour was not nearly equal to that of the grayling; the latter were in every way masters of the situation.

So these are the two largest grayling I ever caught.

The farmer at whose house I was staying that evening asked me whether I knew anything of plants—flowers? I said, "Not in the scientific sense of the term. Why?" "Because," he resumed, "we have just discovered a sweet-smelling flower totally unknown to the oldest inhabitants about here. Come and see it to-morrow; it grows by a lake about an hour away." We made an early start, and were back to the banks

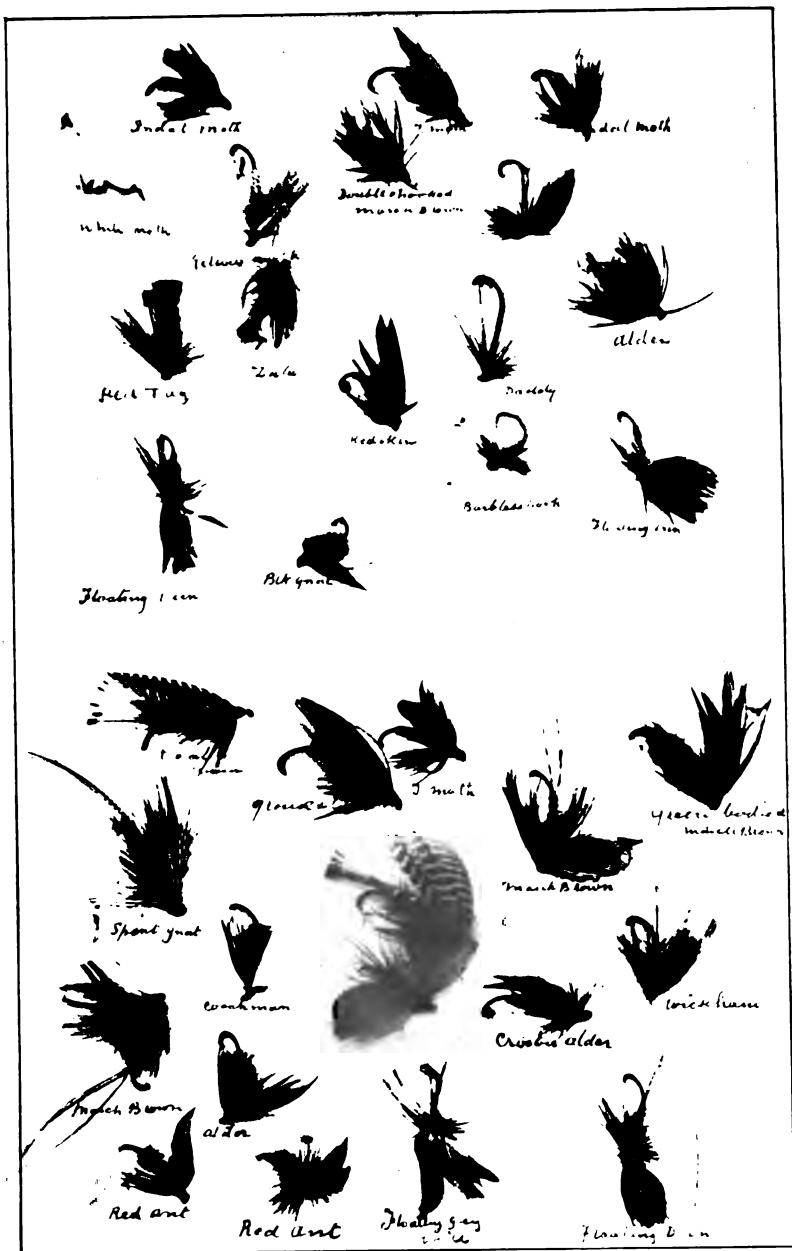
of the grayling stream in good time. The plants, some thirty in number, proved to be small bushes bearing clusters of white flowers. They grew in one patch in deep moss amongst the timber. These flowers gave forth a delicate odour of honey. Messrs. Sutton of Reading afterwards kindly named the plant for me from some dried specimens which I sent them. It is called *Ledum Palustre*.

## CHAPTER VII

*Salmo Trutta*—Wet and Dry Fly—Changeful Habits of May-fly—Birds indicate its Advent—Large Trouts—A Devil of a Stream—Lightly-clad Fishers—Victorious Climax—A disappointing Lake—Notes on Tenting—The Lendsmand's wily Arts.

As *Salmo Salar* is the king of fish, so, in my opinion, is *S. Trutta* the queen, who requires to be wooed with the utmost delicacy, combined with such craft as shall oblige her to quit the stream, more especially when the waters are at low summer level. The fascination connected with the pursuit of this fish is that the really ardent and keen fisherman is not confined to one river, but seeks his prey wherever fancy or information leads him. Without being perhaps a naturalist in the strict sense of the term, he must notice nature in her many moods with a view to the chances of sport, and in one important respect he differs from the salmon angler, in that he is bound for the most part, or rather on special days, to study the flies on the water he is fishing. I am perfectly aware that upon a large proportion of lakes and rivers a "chuck and chance it" system with the wet fly will, given proper conditions, usually fill the bag; yet there are often cases where the natural insect has to be studied.

Though most fishermen in Scandinavia, myself included, use the wet fly with more or less success, as I have stated, yet there are periods when the dry fly will kill, and all other means are useless. Then is the time that you score, when the sun is beating fiercely



MY FLIES



on the waters of lake or river during a day devoid of wind ; but the fish must prove their presence by feeding, or you will do nothing. I have found mayflies prevalent on many of the waters of Scandinavia, but owing presumably to the altitude and difference in climate they are more erratic with regard to their time of rising than the English fly. I have found them at periods from July to September during different years, and in 1901, on water usually frequented by them, there was not a single mayfly during the whole season. In 1893, on a lake with which I was but little acquainted, in Jemtland, and where the fish never rose to the fly, I noticed one day some swallows and terns hawking in a remote and shallow bay. It was dead calm, and pulling quickly to the spot, I was witness of the whole show, little cases coming to the surface quivering, and then suddenly out would pop a pair of ruddy yellow wings, and there was the mayfly complete, and better still, both trout and char snapping them up. Whilst the rise lasted, my daughter and myself enjoyed some pretty sport, commencing with a 2-lb. char, followed by trout of a smaller size.

We should have made a goodly bag, but that there were difficulties, for the water was not more than 6 feet at its deepest. As long as there was no breeze the boat remained motionless, but whenever a gentle zephyr got up she was either blown shorewards or out of the bay, where no fish were rising, and had to be gently propelled back into her first position, thus putting down the fish for a time. The water ran out so shallow near the shore that it was hopeless fishing from the bank.

Then the rise ceased altogether, and we rowed home to our distant farm. So that unless the birds had pointed out this bay to us, we should never have

known that there was any mayfly in the district, for neither on river nor on any other part of this lake was there another instance that year.

It may be observed that on many lakes, especially the large ones, there are one or two bays only where the fish are to be found, the rest of the water being possibly too deep for successful fishing. I was trying such a lake once with everything I could think of; it was far from any human habitation, and as far as I knew, had never been fished before. We sledged a boat on to its waters, and with a Norwegian farmer rowing, used up some hours in unsuccessful attempts with both fly and minnow—especially trying off the points and across the mouths of bays. At length in the afternoon we discovered a long and gloomy lagoon which up to then had escaped our notice, being nearly land-locked. Here, under the thick scrub which clothed its banks, were many small char rising. Having taken several of these, I bethought me of shifting quarters a bit and exploring to the head of the bay, when a tremendous boil proved there was something better in these waters. Shifting tackle, I at once hooked, and eventually landed, a trout of 6 lbs. on a big phantom char; then another of 4 lbs.; next lost one which carried everything away—and I am not in the habit of using old tackle.

In fine, I secured a bag of as many great trout as we wanted. One of these weighing 5 lbs. threw up a char of  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb., which he had just taken. I had my steel-yard with me as usual. Most of the other trout contained half-digested char, so that during that month, August, the small char had come into this particular bay and the large trout after them.

Other waters in the district proved to be “one bay”

lakes at that time of year, but in none of them did the trout rise.

The journey to the farthest of these resorts meant a twelve hours' walk over barren fjelds, which were partly covered with snow. A man and his horse accompanied me, the latter only being used as a pack animal, and carrying our rations, rugs, and *manavilins*, an old naval-colonial term signifying odds and ends.

Throughout the day this gallant pony would founder in the snow-drifts, and it was a relief indeed when we reached a farm late at night; from this spot we could next day see the stone cairns on the mountains marking the boundary between Norway and Sweden. This outing proved such a hard one that I never tried it again, more especially as the trout but seldom rose to the fly, though I secured a few by spinning, the largest 4 lbs.

There is a great charm in trying for fish that have seldom had fly or spinning bait put over them, though perhaps they are acquainted with the otter, and one or two that I caught showed old scars where they had been struck by the leister and escaped—never having recovered their condition; yet in some cases such expeditions have their drawbacks.

Though I prefer using the fly to any other sort of lure, yet I consider that most methods of angling are fair under certain difficult circumstances. In wild out-of-the-way districts much may be excused which would not be considered legitimate in more civilised regions, and I maintain that he is the best man who can get his hook into the fish's mouth—be that hook in fly, minnow, or worm. At some few places which I have come across fish abounded, and yet were inaccessible to ordinary rod and line. One such spot in particular I noted in my journal of the time.



A sharp, deep current glided between dense thickets; no boat was available, and wading was out of the question. The one farmer who knew the place said that he had sometimes captured a fish in these waters with worm, but lost ten for every one he had taken.

“Did they rise?”

“Yes,” he said, “the waters were sometimes alive with them, and once a foreigner was so excited by seeing the fish playing on a certain evening that he rushed in, lost a good one, which carried away his fly, when the man was swept off his legs;” the farmer then dragged him out by laying hold of his rod, which the fisherman very properly had never relinquished.

Two of us viewed this sacred inclosure from every point, and decided to lay siege to it at the run-in, which part was comparatively shallow. So whilst one entered the water in his waders, the other payed out the rope which was round the angler’s waist; but it proved no good. The foothold was very bad owing to the impetuosity of the torrent, slippery boulders and deep holes abounded, and having reached the length of his tether, the wielder of the rod could go no farther, and had to be partly dragged back to a safer position, having only captured a couple of moderate-sized grayling. The farmer, viewing this scene from the bank, was in roars of laughter.

“I told you so,” he chuckled, when we rejoined him; “and yet I thought that Englishmen could always catch fish, else what do you come here for?”

This remark put us on our mettle, but there was no hurry, no train to catch in these wilds, so we sat down, lit the pipes of council, and then and there discussed every lurid scheme we had ever heard of with the intent of invading this river and making her disgorge some of the finny tribe. The farmer said he would use

dynamite, if he could get it; we declined discussing any such horrible attempt, merely telling him that he would kill every living thing in his waters, and that we would show him up in all the newspapers if he attempted such sacrilege; so he went home. I should mention that, for many reasons, employing a raft was out of the question. At length we decided upon a plan, and went off to our camp to further discuss details and prepare a deep-laid scheme.

We found ourselves at the same spot the very next afternoon, fully prepared with a set of gear to carry out a murderous onslaught against this finny tribe, which apparently had defied the arts of men for generations in the "devil's own pool," for so had we christened the place.

No one was there the whole day, which we were glad of, for we hoped to surprise the farmer by the evening.

At the outrun of this long pool, where the water broke into a little foss, we found that we could wade across the river with care. One man stood on the bank with his rod, the other waded across with his, the two rods being connected by their lines.

"A very old dodge which till lately was quite legal in Ireland," will be said; but wait awhile and note the difficulties attending our venture.

Having decided before parting upon our respective movements, as the noise of the stream would prevent anything but halloaing being heard after we were separated, we took off everything but shirts in case of accidents, when, of course, mosquitoes attacked us in myriads, and in the most vulnerable spots; yet we treated this matter as a foreigner once did. The scene was an apartment in Leicester Square, when a Frenchman complained to his friend: "They give me here

tough bifteg for supper, and all the time I am eating horrible insects are attacking me!"

"My dear," returned the other, "this is merely a stimulant which the *bon Dieu* has provided to enable you to attack this vile English meat with ferocity and vigour!"

In this happy frame of mind we attacked our "bifteg." The middle connection between our two rods consisted of a long piece of salmon gut, and from this depended six or eight flies on short lengths of gut.

These flies were large and gaudy, and mounted on eyed hooks. Our difficulties commenced from the very first and lasted to the very end. Every yard of the way had each rod to be passed round trees and bushes which densely clothed the banks, many of the branches reaching far out and over the water. Sometimes by holding on with one hand over the stream, at another by climbing up into bushes or trees, would the rods be worked slowly up the river. More than once had one or other of us to take to the water, hanging on to roots under the bank; a tributary creek also caused delay. For a quarter of the distance we never had a rise, though our flies appeared to be making beautiful evolutions on the surface and below. Half-way up we rose and hooked a fish; we had previously settled who was to play the first one. No net could be used under the circumstances, and the only chance was to tire the fish out, get him under the overhanging bank, go in for him, and, having grabbed him tight, break his neck. In this way we bagged the first, a grayling of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs.; but getting this and succeeding fish to land, together with freeing the other flies from snags and roots, proved so arduous, that the pleasure of playing them was avoided by each of us whenever an excuse could be manufactured. More than once,

when both hands were required to gain the land, the only way to bring the spoil with us was to retrieve it as a water spaniel would.

The bulk of the fish were evidently at the head and deepest part of the run, and here we landed or lost them two or three at a time, both trout and grayling. We took about a score in all, the largest, a trout going 2½ lbs.; but we lost larger ones when close to the bank side, nearly played out, and in full view, so that we could easily measure their length and size generally.

However, we had done enough, so, after putting all tackle up, we dived into the "devil's own" as a final salute to the rest of the tribe, and swam down to the spot where we had left our clothes, and robed, when each walked back and picked up his catch on the respective banks of the stream, took them to the farmer, who was overjoyed, and expressed a wish to pay us for them.

"And how did you catch so many?" he asked.

"With rods and flies," we answered, with perfect truth; at the same time giving him facsimile specimens of those which had done the trick.

To prospect for oneself amongst trout streams and lakes sometimes entails very hard work and often disappointment. It is better to take a native of the district to point out the way, but whether alone or accompanied, always carry wax matches in a water-proof case, for it is quite within the bounds of possibility that you may be "bushed," and may have to camp for the night under a rock, and if your companion does not smoke, he probably carries no lights. The best of guides the world over have lost their way in a fog, and in these Scandinavian mountains dense and lasting mists may suddenly surround one, blotting out

everything within a few feet of the wanderer, who may not even have a compass with him.

I have been caught in this way more than once, and, whenever I think of these occasions, one thing is seared into my memory—mosquitoes. I mind them but little in the daytime, whether in the tropics or even in the Arctic Circle, where they are worst, but at night, when these fearful pests find you are lost, without a shelter of any kind—not even an overcoat—and you are trying to find a soft place to rest and sleep in, then do they trumpet forth their kind from every nook and hollow, and fall upon you, and you pass the night in fighting them, or struggling out of the suffocating smoke of your fire into the fumes of which you have rolled as a temporary refuge from the tormentors.

Touching the disappointments that one undergoes in searching but little-known districts, they are manifold, and the pioneers, for the matter of that, in any country do not always reap the benefit of their discoveries; but “nothing venture, nothing have,” is a good old proverb. Personally, I have wasted many days in thus prospecting; wasted because I found not that which I sought. Sometimes it has consisted of lakes and rivers holding quantities of small fish, say three to the pound, and no sign of larger ones. In other districts I have sampled large trout may be there, but never in condition.

I once found such a lake and river leading out of it. No fish would rise near the shores, but we could see them moving near an island some distance out. An old boat that must have been cast away was discovered in a wood close to the water, and having launched this, one baled whilst the other fished. Every trout that we hooked—and returned—proved to be black and emaciated, and we rowed back to land

just in time, for the water in the old craft was up to our knees. This was at the end of June. Thinking that the trout must improve as the summer wore on, I returned to this lake at the end of August. The Norwegian who accompanied me carried his axe, for we knew that the boat must have rotted away, and so it proved. A fairly good raft was soon on the water, and we made as much haste as possible to approach the island, for there were the trout rising as before. Alas! they were in precisely the same condition, long and lanky, veritable kelts; had they been well-fed fish they should have averaged well over a pound. They took the fly greedily. A man of the district whom we met later said that he had several times taken trout in this lake with an otter, and that they were invariably the same right through the summer months—long and thin; he also informed us that this water was full of *sik* or fresh-water herring. These never take fly or bait, but perhaps in some way they starved the trout.

I have been to many outlying sæters during my wanderings, some fairly comfortable, others quite impossible, rendered so by creeping insects of the foulest kind, which fastened upon one from the time that the light failed. In such a case, perhaps being tentless, the only thing was to coil up in old and clean hay in an outhouse.

Most of these dairies, when near established roads and civilised parts of Norway, are clean and well managed, but on the distant fjelds they possess the poorest accommodation. It could not well be otherwise, for they are simply huts built for the few members of a family who occupy them during the summer months only; yet as long as I could get plenty of cream and *fladbröd*, and good hay to sleep in, I

could always get along, and sometimes find good sport to repay me.

But tent life was by far the most enjoyable of all, and for years I was never without one of those erections; the best gipsy tents I ever had in my life were made by Cameron Russell, a name I never see now.

During the earlier days, when we could take dogs to Norway, year after year have I pitched the canvas on some remote lake or river on the fjelds or in the valley beneath. There one was indeed master of the situation: with a good trench cut round the tent to keep the floor dry, a real tarpaulin to cover the floor, instead of the usual thin waterproof, a simple cooking range built of stones outside, rods, guns, dogs, india-rubber boat, and unlimited scope for indulging in every form of sport, and no licence required, even for shooting deer—what could man want more? These were halcyon days, but bound to give way before the advance of civilisation; yet the recent laws will happily tend to preserve both reindeer and elk.

If the young "camper-out" really understands the art of pitching a tent, is literally "up to the ropes," what better roof, what purer air can he possibly find. The heavier the storm, the more snug does he lie in his shelter; and add to this the independence connected with his movable home! I have lately read with interest "Through the Heart of Patagonia," and enter most heartily into the description of tent life as it is portrayed by the author of that work in some of its pages.

A tent should be so pitched over a "rising" lake that from one's door the fish can be seen breaking the surface of the water; thus one can more or less learn their hours of feeding, and launch a boat when the

rise is on. This brings me to an incident connected with the dry fly; for it was on such an occasion, when camped on some high ground, that the Lendsmand of the district sent me a message that he would like to show me a trout lake of his own, and the method of his fishing.

I have often remarked that if one lived for a hundred years, and was able to fish every season of that century, something new, something strange or unusual, would be taught one during every year of that piscatorial experience. It might be a small matter, still something to be remembered—or forgotten by him who is not an enthusiast—for the future.

In this case the Lendsmand's wily arts were new to me, though I had heard of the system for many years. He was a man of more than middle age, of kindly, serious aspect, and hospitable withal. I took my rod in its case, for I never travel without it.

Arrived at the lake, we put off in a rowing-boat, trim and taut. Not seeing any fishing gear, I remarked that he had not his rod with him.

"No," he returned, with a quiet smile; "I do not fish as the farmers, with a pole—a rod is useless on this lake; wait until we get out to where that breeze is." I waited.

Presently from out of a locker he drew forth a beautifully modelled little swan, to which was attached a long line, and then appeared an endless assortment of every description and size of fly, spoon, and minnow; these were bent on to the main line by gut snoodings. Overboard went the bird, dancing over the wavelets like a thing of life. The pretty toy carried away the line with its varied lures as the rower resumed his oars.



The day was fast falling to a calm, but as long as the breeze lasted many trout were hooked and as many lost. Sometimes a heavy plunge would denote a big fish which had taken one of the baits, smaller ones being already hooked, but which he had not thought worth while to draw in; then he would cautiously take in his line; but invariably during that afternoon did he lose those worth taking. This was doubtless partly owing to the fact that the day was bright, and that they came short. The wind at length dropped altogether; he wound up his line and perched the swan tenderly in the bows of the boat, and we were motionless, when, in one of the bays, the glassy water was suddenly broken by fairy-like rings.

"Ah," he said, "many fish and no breeze, my beautiful bird can no longer capture the fish."

Meanwhile I had been soaking a fine cast and looking out some flies, specially selecting a small grouse wing and ruddy hackle, which somewhat resembled a fly which had settled on the boat. The old gentleman watched these preparations with a sad smile, but said not a word. Having got all ready, I asked him if he would gently propel the boat and move it without splash towards the little bay. This he did, and as carefully as a black fellow paddling up to a sleeping turtle. When within reach of the nearest rise I cast from the bows; the line had been well straightened, the fly flew true to the mark and then floated; a break in the water, and that electric thrill which all fishers love passed up the rod and to every nerve in the body. We were fast; and in this oily calm the boat was even moved.

"Santa Catarina!" ejaculated the old man; "and to think you have hooked him with that!"

He thereupon began to row violently, then seized

the net, scrambled up to me, fell on his swan, broke its neck, said it did not matter, and eventually sat down on the seat as I begged him to.

The next moment we had a pound trout in the boat, which was three ounces less than the largest which the swan had massacred. Another fish made a boil at the same fly but failed to fasten, and would not come again—a peculiarity I have noticed in many Scandinavian waters. In the result, I only secured a troutlet besides the first one. The violent rowing had put them down. Nothing would please the Lendsmand but he must take the rod, but old fishers will know that it would be a hopeless business to try and begin to teach a man fishing under such conditions, where the greatest nicety in touch and casting is required. My companion trembled with excitement as he whipped flies off and thrashed the water with deadly but unsuccessful effort. Then we rowed home. He came to the camp afterwards for a lesson, and returned happy with an assortment of flies and fine collar, vowing that he would practise until he caught fish, and should not even take the trouble to repair the poor swan.

His system proved a barbarous method of taking a few fish and mutilating many more. I had the thing in my hand to try it, and was pretty well convinced that the blind man would be nearly as successful as the one who could see; and yet I came across waters later on where the farmers conclusively proved to me that by no other method could they capture trout excepting by worming near the shore when the water was in spate. I was on a salt-water fjord once with a Norske fisherman, who also produced an "otter"; he said that he could not get near a school of cole-fish without its aid, as they were off at once. He launched his engine,

and it played havoc amongst the shoal a hundred yards from the boat, and he captured several with his powerful tackle, up to 6 lbs. weight: a hint to those who seek the wily bass at home.

To the best of my remembrance it was soon after my first arrival in Norway that I tried the floating fly, not that I knew anything about it, but I happened on the occasion in question to have in my book more mayflies tied on old gut than anything else. Trout were rising along the margin of a small lake, so I boldly put up a mayfly and they as boldly took it, to my surprise, but I got nothing over half a pound. There were none of these flies about, but these foolish little things, which were taking small insects, rarely refused it. I have found this sometimes answer since those days, under much the same conditions, in other waters. On the other hand, there have been very many occasions when they have flatly refused it when there was no mayfly about.

## CHAPTER VIII

“Fossicking” in Sweden—Raw Trout for Supper—A helpful Swede—Mosquito Preventive—Wood-ant Fly makes the Bag—My American Friend—His barbless Hooks—The “Jackshay”—Lapp Boots—Making Coffee—An Island of Troutlets.

SOME pages back, in mentioning my first visit to the Ljusna elv, it will be seen that I deferred an account of further proceedings which occurred between that river and the north-west end of the great Stor Sjö lake in Sweden. Here then follows an account of that tour.

To use a colonialism, I felt a desire to “fossick” in Sweden and turn my back on Norway for a time. At the period of which I write the Meraker railway was not entirely completed; accommodation was rough at that part of Jemtland which I entered, and roads were none of the best. I carried my traps on my back, tried some of the rivers with moderate success, and at length getting rather tired of the endless woods, which were composed chiefly of gloomy fir trees, chartered a broken-down sort of carriole at one of the huts at which I had camped for the night, and told the driver to make for a river which he had informed me contained many big fish. After journeying through endless bogs and pine-tree thickets, we emerged at length on to a decent road bordering the grand lake of Stor Sjö, but no sooner had we arrived there than one of the shafts of the vehicle snapped in two. The driver was of a cheerful disposition, said that he had long expected this, considering the atrocious track we had just quitted, and that as the farm was near he would

not trouble to patch up his vehicle, but would carry my knapsack and things as far as the river. It was now dark. Pushing his old wreck of a cart into the bushes, we set off and arrived about midnight at a dirty-looking hut. The inmates were evidently all asleep, but my guide kicked open the door and dragged a gigantic figure from his bunk, whom he dubbed Theodor.

"The Englishman wants some supper, a bed, and fish in the river."

"There is nothing in the house to eat," was the answer, delivered in a sleepy tone; "no bed, and no fishing to be had here."

Then came a shrill voice from the darkened hut.

"You lie! There is the big trout, and the stranger can lie on the floor."

In obedience to these dictatorial remarks, which were uttered with an unmistakable "do as I tell you" ring, the big man struck a light in an adjoining room and bade me walk in. He then left, saying that he would bring the trout, also some skins for me to sleep on.

My guide had meantime disappeared, and I found next morning that he had spent the night in a hay house, and I only wished then that I had shared this sweet hay. In a few minutes mine host returned bearing a 6 lb. trout which was suspended from a twig. A guttering dip revealed the fact that it was uncooked; I requested to have it fried.

"There is no fire," was the answer, "and we always eat our fish raw."

Had I not been a raw hand myself I should have found my way to the cooking-stove, made a fire, and cooked my fish; but being both sleepy and tired, I told him to put it down and get me some vinegar and pepper.

"We have neither," was his answer.

Our conversation ended here, for there came a furious summons from his old woman to come to bed, so I bade him leave the light and go. The outlook was not pleasant. The inch of candle discovered creeping things on the hard mud floor and walls, so, getting on to a rickety chair, I tried to attack the trout.

I have eaten shark, snake, and such delicacies in my life, but then they were cooked; this trout in its raw state was absolutely tasteless, so I threw it out of the window.

Amongst my rods was a useless old thing of hollow cane; selecting two of the joints I blew volumes of tobacco smoke through them. This permeated under the skins which represented my shake-down. The earthen floor seemed to capture and hold the smoke, and, sitting on the ground, I could direct suffocating quantities of this into every crack and cranny of my log-bound stall, and to my relief saw the beasts scurrying up the walls in every direction before the candle burnt out, and by giving them more rounds of smoke at intervals during the night secured some intermittent sleep, and was not touched by the foul brood.

Next morning the old woman expressed surprise at my objecting to insects sharing my sleeping quarters, and said that it was a most harmless creature called *væglus*—wall louse—which came from the forest and never bit people.

"I see you have eaten the trout," she added.

On peeping out of the window I saw the remains of the fish; some animal had demolished most of it during the night.

I found that the river proved to be a torrent at this spot, and the one hole or "steady" under a bridge in the vicinity of the hut was the place where the owner

secured his trout, great and small, by means of nets and traps. During the day I met a young Swede on the afore-mentioned bridge. He was engaged trying to unravel some scores of flies from a tangled web of soft cord, and told me in excellent English that he had been head clerk to a large Swedish Company, and was now on a fishing expedition with his "otter." This young man proved a most useful and pleasant informant. He knew the river well, and informed me that some miles farther up the valley the waters were less turbulent and full of fish, but that he had never tried his luck there, as it was unsuitable for his method of fishing. He further excused the appearance of his tackle by informing me that he always took a moderate quantity of white brandy before breakfast as a pick-me-up, but that his latest dose was taken in the dark, or else how could he have got his lines in such disorder when he returned from the lake he had been fishing? I had often heard of the Company to which he was attached, and as he told me that he had left their service, I asked him the reason.

"They told me I was too good for them," was his modest reply.

Following his instructions, and accompanied by a small boy, who, acting under orders from my Swedish acquaintance, had first procured me a good supply of provisions, I started up the valley by the cattle tracks which ran along the margin of the river. I had with me a pair of American gum boots given me by a friend, which came up to the thighs. They were of extremely light weight, the leg portion composed of a thin texture which resembled kid, and which was yet perfectly waterproof. These waders would thus roll up like a glove and pack away in a knapsack. They lasted me for several seasons.

Here I must digress a moment to mention a subject to which I did not mean to refer again—mosquitoes; but as I note at this point in my diary that the river swarmed with them and the larger midges, it occurs to me to give the one simple preventive against their attacks, which I had been told of years before by my brother, who had used it with effect in Newfoundland and other parts of the world. The ingredients can always be procured in the country, and often on the spot—namely, oil, sweet for preference, and the juice of fir-tree roots, commonly called Stockholm tar, blended together. The larger proportion of the mixture should consist of oil, too much tar would render the skin tender. Apply it over the face, behind the ears and neck—in fact, wherever the insects usually attack one. It will keep them at bay for an hour or more, according to the heat of the weather; a small bottle should be carried in the waistcoat pocket. The application will easily wash off in a bucket of water. There are endless pretty concoctions advertised containing pleasant and aromatic smells. These are doubtless suitable for ladies and others who require something for the moment; but for the real worker, the man who will fight against all obstacles to secure his fish, I say stick to tar and oil.

In due time, guided by my small boy, who took short cuts across the loops formed by the river, we arrived at a passable-looking farmhouse, where the owner, after a few remarks had passed between us, gave me leave to fish the whole river as long as I liked. The only delay was on account of my boots; such waders he had never seen. Might he put them on? “Certainly,” I said; upon which he got into them and stamped about in admiration, finally walking gingerly into the river, but not venturing into more



than a foot of water. Then came the inevitable question of their value, followed by the request that I would buy him a pair. I was sorry to disappoint him by having to state that this sort could only be procured in America. The good man placed everything at my disposal—milk, cheese, *fladbröd*, including the smoked mutton ham of the family, coffee, of course, and clean hay to lie upon. This latter I placed at night-time on the well-scrubbed floor, as the bunks were too short, as usual.

One always expects great things in sampling an out-of-the-way river—at all events I most certainly do—yet the fisherman is more often than not disappointed in one way or another. In the present case I found the fish, both trout and grayling, small, but then I had arrived late in the evening, and the bed of the river was a nasty one to wade in the twilight. However, before darkness set in I had some small fish in my bag by wading on a shallow. I never use a creel, as it is an unwieldy article to get through the woods with. When first putting my rod together I heard a good fish rise under the bank, but could do nothing with him.

Now, an angler on such occasions should always open his fish and empty the contents of their stomachs into a basin of clear water. Many a valuable hint is by this means given to a fisherman by exposing legs and wings of certain insects. On the other hand, the contents of the fish's stomach often consists of a black, muddy-looking mass, with here and there a tiny shell-fish embedded in it. Two of my catch had been feeding largely on the wood-ants which make their nests of pine needles.

These I had of various sizes, made for dry-fly fishing, and with upright wings. Whether they possess

these at any time of the year I am not aware, but at all events, so dressed, they answered the purpose well. It is a beautiful little fly, and they were well turned out for me by Carter. I would here remark that some of the best tackle-makers do not prepare their work with fast colours, and many times I have been disappointed by finding a bright salmon or trout fly turn into a dirty-looking nondescript after an hour or so's contact with the water.

By daylight next morning I crept down to the river, and from the shore cast my fly up stream on to the overhanging blades of grass, and so let it fall into the water. A good fish seized it, and on feeling the hook rushed under the bank before I could rise to my feet. I ran the line up as far as my arm would reach, found my fly stuck tightly in the roots, and doubtless the fish from his holt was looking on and smiling at the whole proceeding. I spent the rest of the day at this bank work, and the ant on that occasion proved the favourite insect, taking amongst others a trout of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. They proved a good average size, making it apparent that the larger fish would not allow the small fry in the runs under the banks down which the ants were struggling. I was served the same trick once by a hooked fish rushing into the roots, but by putting up a double-handed rod I got on better terms with them.

For a real hunt into the unknown in quest of fish, one's book or case should contain every ordinary and some extraordinary samples of artificial insects.

An angling friend of mine noticed that amongst his catch of trout in one particular portion of his river the stomachs of one or two of them always contained earwigs. He traced the source of this food to a gnarled old tree which hung over the water, and which proved to be full of these insects. These I never saw

as artificial, but "daddies" I always have with me, ever since I found myself in a grayling run on the occasion of a rise of daddy-longlegs; the water was boiling with fish, and they would have this and no other. I only succeeded in taking a couple by impaling a daddy on a hook. Being presumably just hatched, these flies were as soft as a piece of butter; but never since have I seen a proper rise of the long legs.

I have taken trout with both fly and minnow day after day with whole or partially digested lemmings inside them. This was in the far north, and naturally during a lemming year.

I have mentioned that my waders were given me by an American acquaintance. I am reminded of him again in my journal by a reference to barbless hooks. My Yankee friend was one of the best, and in the literal sense of the word, one of the finest fishermen I ever came across. He only used one sort of rod, a 10-foot Leonard, a perfectly balanced little wisp of a wand. He had his peculiarities, and would never try for a record, wherein he showed his sense. I have seen him turn back fish after fish, and some good pounders amongst them, because he did not at the time know that the farmers would be glad of them; but even when later he was aware of this fact, most of his bag would go back unhurt to the river—the smaller ones, at all events—whilst he would retain one or two of the best conditioned for the table, or what he preferred doing, roast them in the embers of a camp fire. And what did he take them with? Invariably the same sort of "spider" fly—a tiny grey or black thin hackle tied on to a hook which possessed no barb whatever. It had a sort of square cut at the bend, and was made with such a cunning twist inwards towards the point that I rarely ever saw a fish free itself. In his hands

it was as good and reliable as any hook ever made. He told me that they were formed out of needles for him by an Italian. And the manner in which he could pick fish out of the veriest shallows, across which I should walk in water scarcely above my ankles to gain the deeper runs, was a marvel. I have watched the stealthy approach at home of a chalk stream "artist," have seen him deftly cast his 00, and hook and kill his fish, on several occasions. Yet here, it seemed to me, in Norway I had met the very master of the craft, such perfect command over himself did he possess, so calm was he in the hour of defeat—a true philosopher. I have seen him hook and play a good fish, and when sometimes they would part company, he would simply look at his mosquito or a fly, whilst a sweet smile would illumine his face as he resumed his casting close to the same spot.

After he returned to his home I received that excellent American work, "I Go a Fishing," by Prime, and it has always seemed to me that he was a follower of the author, in his conscientious, calm, and earnest manner, both in and out of the water, if I may so express it; add to these characteristics, the keenest of anglers—it did one good to be with him. Those who fish the wilder parts of a country, who are cut off from the "madding crowd," would especially enjoy some parts of the book.

To return to my friend's doings in Norway. I saw him one day creep up to a small pile of snags which had stranded 12 inches from the bank. Into this tiny backwater of a foot in breadth, with a gentle turn of his fairylike wand, he floated his spider; there was a wave in the miniature pool, a large trout had fastened, when like lightning the angler drew it down 'twixt bank and timber into the open river,

before the astonished fish had time to move right or left; there he killed him, as I begged him to, a beautifully shaped trout of 2 lbs. I then took it back to its old quarters, and when placed there its back was almost awash, so thin was the water in the holt chosen by this artful old denizen of the river; and there he would probably have remained safe from an ordinary fly fisher like the writer, on one side of him a mass of half-submerged and dead saplings, on the other a waterway under the bank, into which I pushed a stick a yard long.

I was "real sorry" when my brother angler had to make tracks for Boston; he was about the best master of the art I ever met, and many good "tips" could be learnt from his quiet and methodical manner of fishing.

During those days when I attacked the wilds of Scandinavia alone I had little more than a knapsack in the way of luggage, but never went without my *jackshay*. This tin arrangement is purely Queensland, and is but little known in the other colonies of Australia, certainly not under that name. But in Queensland every traveller carries one with him on his horse. It consists of a pint pot fitting into a quart pot, both made of block tin, and is available in many ways.

Both these vessels have movable handles; the smaller one shuts into the greater, and has a ring at the bottom to draw it out again. Push some hay into it and your reels will repose there in safety. Arriving tired and hungry at a poorly provided sæter, you cook your soup, chocolate, or what not in the quart tin, and drink it out of the pint one.

Have you curry powder with you and an onion or two, you only require the easily procured butter, and

plenty of it, or you will burn the vessel, and your largest trout cut up into nuggets to make a curry. Its uses are endless, and comprise two exact measures; so you secure a quick meal out of your own clean vessel without trouble, and are then in a better frame of mind to forage about, pipe in mouth, to seek for the next. They can be perfectly copied in England. A man of resource can go anywhere in Norway with his *jackshay* and *komagers*, or Lapsko, the latter being light waterproof Lapp boots, suitable for that country or any other. Good coffee can be found anywhere in Scandinavia, but if you carry your own, boil a quart of water in your tin, then place your dry coffee in a filter bag, and pour the boiling water through it into the pint pot (or a larger vessel);  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of dry coffee will make a good brew. Any remainder heated up hours afterwards will be extra strong, for this reason I leave the filter bag in the larger pot.

Above the river last mentioned, and on the fjelds, was a lake described to me by the farmer as holding char. The old man and myself got to the place within the hour, and I was pleased to find that there was a boat lying on the margin of the water. Before we launched this I walked round the lake, which was a medium-sized one, and took some small trout by casting from the shore. The day was still, hot, and sunny. My companion informed me that the waters shoaled in the middle over a rocky bottom, and that there the char would show themselves in the afternoon. And sure enough they did, for we could see them breaking the surface of the glistening waters in the centre of the lake. Then we launched the boat and crept quietly towards the spot. It proved to be

slow sort of fishing, but none the less fascinating on that account. A double-handed rod, very finest and longest cast, and a tiny floating black gnat very soon secured me a half-pound char; but taking this one put down all the rest of the shoal, and there was a long wait between the trials. They ran small, and after taking a few they ceased rising altogether. However, by adopting another system, I got two brace more before a chilly evening put a stop to further proceedings. This other method simply consisted in selecting a small dark fly with closed wings, which might be supposed to resemble a drowned black gnat, casting it far out, letting it sink, and then drawing it slowly through the water. My largest char did not weigh a pound, and there were very few heavier ones in the water, so the old man said. My only reason for mentioning this petty angling incident is to prove that on that sunny day the only way to take the char was as I have described.

For obvious reasons it is not my intention to give the actual locality of free angling resorts, most of which can, moreover, be found in the guide-books, yet I see no objection to writing about an island which, I believe, is still free to all, and will be probably for many years, chiefly because it is a land of troutlets; the streams in it are not worth considering, but the interior gives scope to him who would rough it with the view of securing trout in plenty, yet of small size. All are fish that come to the rod of the true piscator, and personally I consider a catch of many dozens of quarter-pounders in a day to the fly to be a source of great satisfaction; it should be borne in mind that the lakes I refer to are full of these plump little fellows, and that none of the spoil is wasted. Pulling out troutlets two and three at

a time may pall upon the fisherman; if so, there is the further attraction of exploring adjacent waters and seeking for the chance of larger fish. In point of numbers and free rising even a Devonshire fisherman who has fished the moorland rivers of his county in days gone by would have been surprised; on the other hand, he would be disappointed at finding but few glittering streams with their bright stickles, for the waters I refer to are but small lakes, and the fishing is from the banks, though I sometimes found a little beck connecting them, that contained small trout.

I refer to the island of Tysnæs, making the adjacent islet of Godö headquarters.



## CHAPTER IX

Prospecting the Islands—Wet *versus* dry Fly—Advice to Beginners  
—Mysterious Waters—Pine Débris poisoning Fish—Making a  
Raft—Running a River to its Source—The Owl Lake—Trout  
decline a white Fish—Autumn Haunt of Red Deer.

MANY years ago I visited Tysnæs, camping at the island of Stordö, to the south of it, for a few days previously, where, however, I got but little sport with the rod, as I devoted my time more to the gun and winged game. At Tysnæs I put up at various farms, and enjoyed myself with both rod and gun.

More recently I have been there and found an excellent hotel at Godö, kept by Gullaksen, where fjord steamers constantly call. These make the trip to or from Bergen in five or six hours. The Hægland Vand, close to Godö, I found overfished during these later visits, and I should recommend any one to take one of the hotel boats and, together with a man who knows his way amongst the numerous islets, make for the more southern parts of Tysnæs. Were I going again I should place some provisions in my boat, as storms are apt to spring up suddenly, sometimes rendering it impossible to return to headquarters. Whatever lodging the explorer finds on Tysnæs would be rough—small farms as a rule—with little or no comfort.

Once during these later years I left Godö in the morning, and returned there late at night with fifteen fat trout, the heaviest  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lbs.

These I took in a mere pond, and I never found

its like again in the island. All these were taken on the dry fly, which consisted of two distinct sorts of a small Alder I had of Carter's. The biggest fish ran me right across the water before I could turn him, so that will give some idea of the dimensions of this little pool. Two hours up and over the fjeld from this spot brought me to another and a larger lake which boasted of an island. Here my son and I took out trout up to half a pound, two and three at a time as fast as we could cast, till a violent cold mountain storm put the fish down and drove us homewards. Another lake I tramped to absolutely swarmed with troutlets. On these fjeld lakes it was perfectly immaterial what fly was used as long as it was a small one and fished wet.

Amongst other trips I visited two lakes on different days, and rough walking it was, only to find that they were devoid of life excepting for the fact that loons and waders were stalking about in the shallows; this fact caused me to imagine that there must be fish there, but during the hours spent on the banks I saw neither rise nor sign.

There are also numerous small lakes on the high fjelds of Tysnæs, which can be reached by another route. Row for a couple of hours south-west from Godö and up a fjord, at the head of which is a church and a small wharf for steamers, where leave the boat. Hire a carriole from one of the farmers, and tell him to drive you to the cluster of lakes on the fjelds. It takes some hours to arrive at these waters, passing lakes and rivers by the way, till you ascend the fjelds and thus approach your fishing ground from the opposite side to Godö. Here on a favourable day you may fill many creels with troutlets. It makes a long excursion, longer if the sea has "got up," thus pre-

venting your return by water. I was told of lakes holding pike, which were situated on the right-hand promontory of this fjord as one went up, but I never visited them. Parts of Tysnæs are beautiful. All the wooded islets are, they lie in close proximity to the famous Hardanger fjord.

In Norway, unless the waters be calm, the wet fly will always make the bag. Many times I have had proof of this.

To state only one case. Having first donned a pair of long waders I made my way out into the broken bed of a swift river, for there were certain tiny pools in the centre of the stream amongst the boulders, and there I elected to fish with the dry fly. My companion was to follow the ordinary system, wet fly, and two if he liked, but we agreed that he should work his single-handed rod with his left hand only, a form of casting which he had never practised before. How is it that all children are not brought up to shoot, fish, and throw with their left arms as well and strongly as with their right?

In a couple of hours' fishing my friend had nineteen trout, whilst I had only five. Yet there is a fascination in seeing your floating insect sucked down, when, with hand grasping the rod but not the line, you simply raise your wrist, or should do so; but here to me is the difficulty. After all these years I strike constantly with the arm and lose many flies and fish. In the incident above related luck was somewhat against me, the river was rather full, and several trout when hooked fought out of the pools into the heavy stream, tore down the current and smashed the fine tackle amongst the rocks. But after all what does this matter when there are plenty of fish?

The loss is compensated by the music of the reel, and the knowledge when the fish finally parts company that you will look upon his like again, and probably very shortly.

As before remarked, in these notes upon angling in Scandinavia, I have abstained from mentioning fishing localities, fearing that by doing so I might be encroaching on private waters, excepting in the case of the Tysnæs island, which no one would rent for fishing.

What I wish to impress upon those who have had but little experience of the country is this. Make your way to one of the many fishing inns which you have heard of or read about in recent guide-books, and unless the fishing is fairly good at the angling resort you fix upon, get out your Amt map of the district, upon which you will see many lakes and rivers marked. Take into your confidence some farmer or herd-boy belonging to the hamlet, tell him what you want, and he may guide you to a bit of fishing which you would otherwise never have heard of. This may turn out to be no better than the waters near the hotel, and you may have a long and hot walk to prove this, but, after all, it is the only way—to see for yourself. “Plough your own furrow.”

On the other hand, it is quite on the cards that your man may guide you to a good “rising” lake, or a river containing good-sized trout. Besides, it will naturally occur to the angler to make conditions with his guide before starting, so as not to be carried along on a fool’s errand. As to pay, a man can always be hired for such a purpose in the interior of Norway for two kroners a day, excepting during hay-time, and something may well be added if he shows you anything good. On many occasions, during my first year in

the country, I have received the greatest assistance in the way of information by appealing to one of the many university students, gentlemen who are spending their vacations in walking tours. They are only too glad to help the wandering Englishman, if approached with due courtesy, and there are many pleasant ways of returning their kindness which will occur to the honest angler.

I once came across a river of mystery.

It was in this way. Having followed a wounded elk for many hours (in upper Namdalen), I managed at length to kill him by a lucky shot as he swam a flooded river. Night was coming on, and the hunter and I returned by another valley to our hut.

By this route we partly followed a new stream which was hardly in spate, and in a broad part of this water we heard and saw a good fish move, and made a note of it.

Next day I accompanied the sledge which was to bring back the carcass of the elk, taking a rod with me besides the rifle. Our elk hound, which had been missing all night, we found coiled up in the gralloched body of the elk, nor would he allow any one but his master to come near the carcass; so leaving the hunter to arrange matters, I made for the river where we had seen the fish, a farm lad having previously been sent there with a boat, which he had procured higher up the valley.

This was in September, and as snow was falling with a northerly wind it was hardly weather for fly, though I tried this for a short time without result. Then I changed to a bar-spoon, and in half-an-hour had six trout all over a pound each. These were in lovely condition, and as red in the flesh as salmon. Several more I lost. Shortly after this I left for

England, and the next year saw myself and friends fully equipped with tackle and prepared to make large bags. Vain surmise! and here comes in the mystery, and gives one example of the many ways in which an angler may be disappointed in Norway without knowing the why or the wherefore. We arrived in August, naturally enough went straight to the same pool and tried every conceivable lure for a whole afternoon, working also above and below the spot where I had found the trout the previous year, without getting a single rise or run. Next day the same thing occurred. The water was in the same order as on the previous season, but all life seemed to have forsaken it.

A fortnight afterwards, during the elk season, we found the trout, to our astonishment, steadily rising off a point which we had fly-fished and raked for hours on our first arrival. Why had they not fed then? Where had they been? They were now taking a tiny, black insect, and with a floating black gnat we secured a three-pounder and others of goodly weight. Every evening after this we had more or less sport, but always off the same point. These fish were also in grand condition.

Later on I worked my way many miles up this same stream, through dense and hot scrubs, till I came to a rather tall foss which fell sheer some 200 feet. On getting into the pool below this, I found I was wading into a thick, spongy mass of sodden pine débris which paved the bottom some eighteen inches deep, the peelings of logs which for years had been swept over the foss, result of the lumberers' work in distant forests above. The first fish I took was on a Zulu dropper. It was emaciated, weighed 4 lbs., and should have drawn the steel-yard to six. Others which I landed were in the same

condition, and the lot went back to the river whence they came.

Subsequent experience in other parts of Scandinavia proved conclusively that this pine bark brewed a decoction which poisoned the fish in such waters.

It was very different above the foss, which stretch of the river I visited shortly afterwards, with a native carrying axes and augers. Here was a long, sharp, rocky scour, terminating in a broad expanse of water up to the lip of the foss. In the clean, shingly bed I bagged trout and char of moderate size, and at mid-day we set to work cutting down dead fir trees, plenty of which were standing on the bank, and soon formed a raft to carry two. If it had not been for rafts during these years of fishing, many lakes and some rivers would never have been sampled, for casting from the bank is often no proof at all of the capabilities of some waters. There is also a certain satisfaction in helping to make and launch your own "float," and in a couple of hours or less from the first stroke of the axe, find yourself getting on terms with trout that avoid the banks of clear water. Any one who can use an axe and an auger can make a raft. Here is the most simple plan, which we carried out on this occasion. Had we been utterly in the wilds, we should have had to use birch withies or binders, a long process, as they must be passed through the fire and then twisted to render them extra tough; but for the raft under discussion, we had brought three planks of deal and some stout spikes or nails, also a piece of thin new rope.

Having cut our logs, which were anything from 10 to 14 inches through, into lengths of 8 or 10 feet, we then bored holes through both ends of each log and rolled them into shallow water. Having then passed

the lines through these ends and made fast, there was the raft formed, and all that was left to render it safe was to pin the planks across. A couple of rough saplings were hewn into some sort of shape as oars, and mounted on to forked sticks which stood for outriggers. Had there been no stream, a long pole would have answered the purpose. In the present instance it was this very stream that prevented our getting any large trout, for a raft is difficult to manoeuvre so as to allow the fisherman to trail astern. We secured some sizeable trout with fly, and suddenly saw a splendid fish leisurely heading up, almost under the raft, but getting our craft up stream caused such an agitation amongst the finny tribe that they would look at nothing after that, though they had a choice of spinners offered them. So we anchored our raft to let them get used to it, and went home. A week later we did better, but could not get hold of any real big fish; these evidently despised flies. However, without the logs to float us out we should have got nothing. On many other occasions rafts have been made for me, which answered the purpose well enough, when neither rope nor nail was procurable.

Proceeding another day to the distant upper portions of this river, we found it broken up into deep, dark pools, with a strong current running through them. The trout did not seem to lie here, but in the shallow connecting streams a good rise was apparent one evening, and I did well with tiny dark flies casting up stream, but caught nothing over a pound weight. However, it is always satisfactory to run up a river to its source. We found eventually that it came out of a very large lake. Returning by the northern bank one day, we saw five large trout under the rocky shore. To get upon terms with these meant retracing our

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steps for a couple of miles and wading the river. However, it was worth it, for with a long cast I killed a fat 2-lb. trout; his gambols effectually scared his remaining companions for that day.

My experience has been that it is of no use telling a wandering fisherman of a stream or lake where you yourself may have had good sport. Something or other has entirely changed the aspect of affairs by the time your man gets there—perhaps a dry summer has set in—and if he does find the place up to his expectations, you will only hear in an indirect way, perhaps from a native, that he has had good sport. No; there is too much rush nowadays, or the old-time courtesy of writing a letter in this connection has departed.

Once I made my way through the woods and over the fields to a sheet of water which I found on the Amt map, and which the farmers called “Katugle Vand,” or Owl Lake. These grand snowy birds used to sit about on the higher rocks and mew like cats. I found the trout rising in the Owl Lake beyond a fringe of reeds which bordered the water, and lost so many in attempting to land them through this pipe grass that I had a boat sledged up next day. The farmer placed it on the water, and then had to return to his haymaking. I did but little better with the boat, which the fish had never seen before, and then bethought me of rowing out into the deeper water and spinning. As an old angler is aware, to work your boat and neatly spin your minnow single-handed requires a bit of manœuvring, and sometimes, under these conditions, to borrow a phrase from my American friend, you feel much inclined “to kick yourself.”

After about an hour on that loch—sixty minutes composed of erratic pulling and hasty expressions—I saw fish rising inside the weed-bed close to the shore.

This was encouraging, and pulling in I found them in a curve of water only a few feet broad. Some were feeding under the very bank, so, stalking up and putting a floating fly over a feeding fish, I had him at once. It was pretty sport, when the trout on feeling the hook rushed from the land, to see the line bending down the pipe grass in the fish's track, which doubtless it knew as well as a rabbit knows its own run. Thus they seldom hung me up in this first rush, and I got most of them back when partially played out, being able to direct them fairly well with a double-handed rod which I had put up. These were sizeable trout, which came in to the shallows towards evening for flies settling on the grass. After this experience I visited Owl Lake in the afternoon only. My bags were small ones, as a long interval had to elapse between the captures in such thin water. One thing should always be borne in mind, if the weather is favourable, and that is to fish during evening and night in all the shallows and inlets of a lake or river, as the trout will usually congregate there after being all day in the deeper water. Yet this is not always to be depended upon; there are often exceptions.

Perhaps they sleep sometimes. Who can tell? Not the wisest man can say.

Another "tip" that I picked up about this period, was that trout do not always take to a strange fish as food, spin the angler never so wisely.

I have already mentioned the Florö fjord. The head of this long stretch of water is banked up by black rocky precipices. From the foot of these to the salt water runs a little rocky stream consisting of perhaps three holts, where sea-trout lie.

This was described as a salmon river, and I went

to look at it, and immediately found that it was not worthy of being designated even as a sea-trout stream. I caught on the first day some five or six sea-trout, one drawing the scale to nearly 2 lbs., and emptied the stream until the next tide. Two seals ever and anon popped up their heads and watched the proceedings as I played this fish close to the sea, and no doubt they took their nightly toll of spoil. "Where does this stream come from?" I asked a fisher lad, and he told me that its source was a deep lake up in the cliffs, and that he would guide me there.

The way was rough. We surmounted certain rocky ledges, which took a bit of climbing, to where a deep black pool of about an acre in extent was caught and held by a ring of precipices. A charge of dynamite at the lip of this would have sent the whole mass of water roaring into the valley below. An old boat was kept on the lake, so old that the boy did not remember it ever having been used. He had cut a baler from the bark of the last birch tree we had passed, and we launched her from her home, which was situated between two large boulders. I had taken up with me a cigar-box full of the beautiful miniature herrings, which can be procured at any of the tackle shops of the chief Norwegian towns, guessing, "from information received" previous to starting, that in this high and gloomy gorge there would be but little chance for fly fishing. I spun that water round and round and raked it many times across, having frequently to come ashore during these operations for the purpose of baling out the old craft, without seeing a sign of a fish, and at length remarked, "There is nothing here," to which the lad, who up to this had kept his own counsel, replied, "Your bait is very well for the fjord, but there are

large brown trout here, and they have never seen a white fish."

These were indeed words of wisdom, as the sequel proved, for I put on a brown phantom, had a run at once, and landed a 4-lb. trout, very dark, as befitted the water, but in prime fat condition. Eventually I returned to the valley with ten more, the lot weighing 15 lbs. In this instance the case was undoubtedly proved, for I am perfectly certain that had I not had a phantom with me I should have got nothing. I enjoyed a little of all sorts of fishing sport with the farmer-fishers who inhabited this humble valley, for before leaving it I accompanied them during their all-night raids on the herrings, for which the fjord was famous. It was interesting to witness the Norwegian system of fishing with regard to this great industry. The very first herrings which my friends took were the large ones known as *kjöbmands sild*; these were at once packed off to the Bergen market, and commanded top price.

I had ocular proof when exploring the mountain pool that the large red deer frequented this district in the autumn. The farmers corroborated this, and wished me to stay on and shoot a *kron hjort*, but having other fish to fry I took my departure, having spent a very pleasant time amongst these honest folk.

I was sailed up the fjord by one of the fishermen's daughters to Florö, and so caught a coasting steamer.

## CHAPTER X

Great Trout of Sweden in Former Days—A Good Time with the dry Fly—Whole Meal Bread—Bad Traces—Scandinavian Trout easier to take than Home Ones—Mystery of “Bulging” or “Smutting”—A Persevering Friend—The Indal Moth—Pike—How to Pot Char—To Kipper Fish—The Use of a miniature Gaff.

I WAS amused by overhearing a conversation one night, which took place in the smoking-room of one of Wilson's liners, concerning large trout in Sweden. Said one man : “All these yarns about the big trout—20 lbs., and so on—are myths.”

“Phantom fish,” replied the other.

I am not saying that gigantic specimens such as these are to be found now, yet did they know of the monsters taken in former years in Jemtland? I had not the luck myself to be able to assist at any such captures, which took place before I had visited that part of Sweden, but I have seen photographs of a 25-lb. trout and one of 19 lbs. These were taken on the same day by one of the most famous of our English sportsmen. Years ago monsters were taken by an Englishman out of a short but deep torrent which joins two lakes in the Kall district ; and I once travelled home with a couple of anglers, who showed me some kippered trout on board the steamer, the weights, they stated, when taken from the water, ranging between 16 lbs. and 22 lbs., and judging from the length, breadth, and thickness of these fresh kippers, these weights were well within the mark. All these fish were taken spinning.

These hallowed spots have all been fished out years ago, as far as these leviathans are concerned. Other parts of Sweden hold as large fish, but the angler will have to go far north, and rough it to a degree, to get amongst them.

The largest trout that I have known killed to the *fly* in Jemtland was taken by my brother in his own river; it weighed  $9\frac{1}{2}$  lbs.—a noble, thick fish—and was landed by my wife.

It was in this district in 1901 that I came in for a bit of dry-fly fishing which was as unexpected as it was enjoyable. It took place at the end of the season, in September.

As a matter of fact my mates, the two other rods, had gone home. We had done pretty well; during the first week of our visit<sup>1</sup> we had killed 400 lbs. of trout, the fish ranging from 1 lb.—the limit—up to 5 lbs., all on fly. Our best evening represented 68 fish, weighing 72 lbs.; all these with the wet fly, for there was but little chance with the dry. And now by sheer good luck I was to have the fun of the fair, for no one could have foretold that the first days of September would have been perfectly still, with a blazing sunshine and cloudless sky; that many of our old insect friends would reappear, and that trout, and large trout only, would assemble to snap them up in a bay wherein I had hardly ever seen a fish rise before. This bay was practically the outrun of a great lake, and the trout had evidently come from the river for the purpose of spawning, as will be seen. Stone flies, sedges, duns, and other flies I thought had departed for the year, but on every one of these hot days did they appear at long intervals in clouds upon the water.

<sup>1</sup> One of our best seasons was 538 trout and char, weighing 716 lbs.

They seemed a hybrid lot—there were certainly no March browns, a favourite fly on the river during the summer months—but some of the smaller duns I recognised. Every evening an hour before sunset they disappeared, and every night there was a frost.

During the first days of this glorious weather I was boating across the bay by myself with the intention of looking up some woodcock which frequented a dell on the opposite shore, for there were many of these birds about at the time, when I suddenly rowed into a swarm of flies of sorts. Some settled on the boat, others on the water, where trout sucked them down in that solemn, quiet manner which betokens weight. The rise was evidently fully on, and I turned about and made all speed to fetch my rod, leaving the birds for another time, but was almost too late for the trout, for the insects had nearly disappeared by the time I returned. However, I took three fish that day before the evening closed in with its sting of frost. I had come without a net, an article which I certainly often discarded whilst wading, but which is absolutely necessary when fishing from a boat. The first trout proved the best; he, or rather she, rose leisurely, with what one might describe as a matronly rise, and, displaying the broad golden gleam of a good fish, took a fly within a few feet of the boat, which was lying motionless. Before the ring had fully developed, the artificial lit in the centre of it, and was at once seized, showing that these rising fish were keeping near the surface, for the water at this spot was 20 feet in depth, as we had proved by plumbing. This trout had to be played till it was nearly dead, for having no net, my only chance of securing it lay in grabbing it round the body. It weighed  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. Its maw was full of freshly killed flies, the examination of which

enabled me to find a better copy in my book. This fish contained a fully developed roe, which brought the actual weight down to 2 lbs. I was obliged to tap this one on the head, but for the rest of the time followed the example of my American friend, and returned all others to the water, merely retaining one or two for the table. The usual frosty evening set in, and I returned home.

The following morning saw me on the spot by 11 A.M. with lunch and literature, determined to see the play out. Here I will digress for a moment by referring to the bread which I invariably eat in Scandinavia. It is simply whole meal, which can always be procured in the larger towns of that country under the name of "Graham's *hvid mel*"; presumably a Scotchman of that name first introduced this system of milling wheat. I make my own bread, or show the girl how to do it, being no believer in the refined white loaf of any country, where all the really wholesome portions of wheat are taken away, those specially which digest the starch. This is done at the expense of health, and appendicitis and other kindred disorders have been traced to the effects of this indigestible mass, which is certainly not a "staff of life" to some people.

Several scones should be made at the time of baking; they keep fresh for some time, and are invaluable for "outings" of all sorts. Here is the receipt: Take 1 lb. whole-meal flour, rub into it a pat of butter, three or more teaspoons of Yeatman, thin skimmed milk to make all consistent, mix quickly and bake forty minutes in a quick oven; and there is the only difficulty, namely, a quick oven when you have only wood fuel. *Note.*—Mind your Yeatman is not old powder. Better than this is yeast, if you can get it.



I have of late years procured whole meal of Hoff, baker in Thronhjem.

On this second day I had not long to wait, for the fly began to show as usual about noon, and the trout proved to be in the same spot, evidently waiting for them. Now here was dry-fly fishing for once made as easy as shelling peas; again no breeze, and so no trouble with the boat.

I had had plenty of time on the previous night to think over and prepare all gear and *manavilins* for the fray, and being alone, suffered no interruption in the exercise of my schemes, so that when launched, the boat presented somewhat the appearance of a Thames punt under certain conditions, laden as it was with books, the latest home papers, a basket containing lunch, and some of the pure ale of the country. An 11-foot split cane rod was rigged up complete, extra fine gut collars soaked and stretched out ready for instant use. Eyed flies, and I never use any other, stuck in a sheet of cork. Pipes ready filled with tobacco, for not a moment should be wasted during the rise.

Whenever a fish rose at the natural fly I either hooked or missed it, and many times on this special occasion did they come again, being for the most part bulging with roe, owing to which fact their appetite was doubtless keen. I took and returned twenty-three, having first weighed them and chalked the figures up in the boat. The average was a pound. Putting these back in the water did not scare the others, owing to the great depth. The red ant fly proved as good as others, and any of them with a drop of odourless paraffin on the hackle would float minutes in this calm water. When at length the rise had apparently stopped I made one cast, put down the rod, left the fly floating and took up a book. Presently there was a boil, and lifting the rod smartly

I found a good fish on. After much boring at the bottom and one long run he came to the net, weight, a fraction within 2 lbs., and I kept him to make a fresh kipper of. It was our habit all through the season to smoke many of our trout, only to eat them shortly afterwards. It is curious how guileless are most of the Scandinavian smaller fish. Many times I have fished a run with a double-handed rod and wet fly, and placed a floating fly with another rod in an adjacent backwater of the river where I had seen fish feeding, and in this way have taken them several times. After all, there is nothing astonishing in this, as the backwater fish is cruising about undisturbed, and snaps up what to him is the special insect he is seeking. I have sometimes thus killed two and three in an hour whilst the mayfly or grey moth was on. The moths I refer to are out all day, and seek refuge on the silvery bark of the birch, where it is difficult to see them.

Before I finally left off, after having killed the 2-lb. fish, I hooked another in a curious manner. During a pretty long experience I never got my hook into the web of the tail of a trout, though I have some recollection of doing this with a salmon. Even close to the end of this appendage it proved to be as tough as leather, for though my fine cast would not stand much strain, I put on as much pressure as I dared with the fish fighting at the bottom for minutes, causing me to think that a very heavy and sulky trout was on. I got his tail end up at last, and he proved to be barely 1 lb.

A curious incident which happened to me during that year—1901—completely altered the favourable opinion I had always entertained with regard to wire traces in spinning for lake trout, and for the future I use gut only.

On the same water that I have been describing, but at least three miles farther up the lake, I was trolling in the month of August with a couple of rods fitted with two quite new wire traces, each composed of eight or ten strands of very fine wire, and both very flexible. I hooked a large trout. He shot off for fifty yards, all gear running freely; then he came to the top of the water and rolled round and round till he twisted the trace right in two, leaving about a foot of it attached to the main line. It was evident that he had rolled himself up like a mummy, for there he lay like a dead thing on the top of the water. We rowed cautiously towards him. The gaff was ready to drink his blood, when, within a few feet of us, he slowly wriggled into the depths. Ten minutes afterwards I hooked another. He evidently indulged in the same twisting game under water, for in getting him alongside the boat after some three or four minutes' play, he had hardly a kick in him, whilst the wire had tied him up from head to tail, but this time it held, though several strands were parted, and I put the gaff into him; he was a fine fat fish, and weighed 9 lbs.

Now, I trust that any one who reads the foregoing will not suppose that I consider myself an expert with the dry fly—nothing of the sort. The really clever men at this work are those who frequent the chalk streams of England, who can cast their midge of a fly far away, and often in the teeth of the wind, and so cause it to drop like a snowflake into a 12-inch run between two banks of weeds. I have watched one of these artists more than once with envy and delight. But how runs the case in Scandinavia? In the first place, the fish in out-of-the-way districts know but little of the glint of a rod; they do not recognise the same pink wickham, or "that blue upright that was

over us yesterday ;” they are not terrified out of their lives if some one stamps lightly on the bank ; and the casting is made easy to the angler because seldom or never is the river or lake choked with weeds.

Fly fishing for trout and grayling in Norway and Sweden is an easily acquired art ; yet some of the youngsters I have come across are too hasty with regard to their first lessons. If they practised a bit on the lawn at home before coming out, by putting up rod and fly with a well-straightened gut-line to pay it out, and picked up, or pitched upon a leaf lying on the grass, day after day, with the wind in different quarters, they would find the advantage when they eventually reached the water-side, and remembering their home lesson, would send a straight and finely delivered line over the first fish, instead of allowing their gut collar to perform a series of circles on the water. Every fisherman has his own special knots for fastening fly to gut collar, but let the tyro learn one, the “swab-hitch,” the simplest and surest of all. It cannot well be described without an illustration, yet any seafaring man will show “how it’s done” ; only do not make the swab-hitch without a fastening-off knot if the eye of the fly is of gut, for gut in gut will slip.

But though, as remarked, trout and grayling are easily captured in Scandinavia, there is one period when they are most “cussed.” I refer to the fish when engaged in “bulging” in a stream. The difficulty of taking them when engaged in these mysterious movements applies also to England. I have searched sporting papers, have also made many inquiries, but can hear of no “royal road” by which one can take these fish when the bulging or smutting fit is on them.

Year after year have I consumed many hours at this tantalising form of angling, and with no result. There

was one river in Hedemarken famous for its grayling; the few trout in it were small, and elected to stay in one long and rocky run where this river debouched into a lake, and they scarcely ever showed excepting at this period of bulging. Then the run was alive with them, and not a grayling amongst them. I tried them from the shore without result, then anchored a boat in their midst, and sat quietly on the seat to try and see what they were rising at; but not a single fly could be seen, even with the help of a pair of glasses. These small trout showed no fear, but kept rising round the boat; their sharp and diminutive splashings continued during the whole time I was there. By floating a tiny dun I secured one fat little fish, but not another would look at it after this; then, taking an equally small wet fly, I proceeded to sink and draw by means of a shot pinched on the gut a few inches above the fly. This muckle dodge was totally ignored. In my book were some tiny hooks with nothing but a minute piece of wash leather wound round the shank; presumably this was to imitate a caddis. This seemed to me so natural, as it was drawn up to the surface, after plumbing the three or four feet of water, that at every trial I quite expected to feel a fish. They would have none of it. Result, after a couple of hours spent in testing everything I could think of, one small trout; and I left them gambolling, with mixed feelings on my part.

I pass over similar experiences, and come down to a specially aggravating case which occurred as late as September 1902, and in the same stretch of waters wherein lay the bay—the scene of the late rise of fly and trout. This time it consisted of a broad stream of slowly moving water, varying in depth from six feet and more, the bottom paved with a forest of weeds. During August we had taken some good fish, both

trout and char, out of this run with both wet and dry fly. At the end of that month, and lasting till about the middle of September, the whole of this water on every warm day was one boil of rising trout and char, thirty and more at a time; the circles, caused by these fish, rippling into each other. During a flat calm this was quite a sight, soon to develop into a painful one, for with hundreds of the beauties breaking the water, we should have been without fish for the table had it not been for sure finds in rushing rocky streams elsewhere. Everything, every plan was tried, day after day—early hours, far into the night. With the boat drifting slowly in their midst, the nearest approach to drowned winged insects of many sorts, drawn gently past and under them, failed to get even a smell. The hours spent day after day palled upon one, as a description of these unsuccessful efforts would pall upon the reader. I need hardly say that tiny wickhams and duns of sorts were floated over them times without number, the boat often being anchored for the purpose, making it easy to cast up stream, almost into the mouth of every fish which rose near.

Often would it pass through my mind, whilst engaged in this exasperating occupation, "What would C. of the Test do under these circumstances?" "How would D. of the Itchin attack these fish?" and "How would my American friend 'surround them'?"

To quote Artemus Ward, "I pawse for a reply." But enough of these failures. Some day I hope to be "put up to the ropes," and learn in what way the artful "bulger" is to be circumvented.

Meantime, during this week of failures, some of our party were recompensed by finding trout rising off the point of an island to which so far we had paid but little attention, through being occupied with the gun

at this period. Therefore, on the next trip rods were taken, and some good trout caught with the wet fly. These fish were not smutting, as far as one could judge, nor was there any fly to be seen on the water at the spot. They were simply congregated in a large shoal near a long spit of rocks, and were apparently merely sporting. They were all large trout, not a char amongst them. Now and then they took a fly, but soon disappeared, to be seen again on subsequent afternoons.

When one has an extent of water stretching for some miles to deal with, it takes many seasons to find out all the "rising" bays and shallows frequented by the smaller fish, and the periods of their feeding on flies, especially as most of the time is taken up by spinning in the deeps for the large trout. Besides, when the shooting season opens, the gun takes the precedence, and though one may shoot and fish at the same time when ducks are about, this is hardly the period one would choose for making a voyage of discovery for rising trout. And again, it must be borne in mind that having discovered such a spot the waters may get up with the sudden fury which they are apt to do in high altitudes swept by storms, and one may be cut off from headquarters perhaps miles away. If trout frequented one special stretch of water with regularity it might be worth while to put up some sort of shelter for the night on the adjacent shore, but these fish are erratic in their habits, and it by no means follows that because you have discovered them one season that they will be found frequenting the same place on the following one.

What a virtue is patience—perseverance—specially in connection with angling. I remember, and notes taken at the time aid that memory, one hot summer

not so long ago, when the rivers ran down to mere becks, when the music of the fosses had almost ceased to greet the ear, and the bottom of the waters was paved with such a dense mass of flannel weed that the rocks were hidden.

Then we found that the only chance was to fish from sundown to midnight—after that hour the trout would not rise. For two nights we had done fairly well with white flies, there seemed to be a sudden craving for these on the part of the trout, for never before had we done anything worth mentioning with even a white moth; but happening to put up a large coachman one night, it was seized by a good fish, which when landed turned the scale at 5 lbs. Though a beautiful colour both outside and in, he would probably have weighed an extra pound before the season was over. After this experience I tied white wings on to many sorts of flies, and for some three or four evenings these proved the favourites; when the fish just as suddenly disdained them altogether, and we had to revert to our old-established favourites. One night three of us had gone off in our respective boats to fish the river as usual. A Scotch friend elected to fish the river in his waders. He took his stand in one spot where the waters of the lake foamed and rushed into the river. There he stood for three solid hours without shifting his position, merely changing his flies once during that time. When the night's catch was weighed, nothing being kept under a pound, the Scotchman had a greater weight of trout than had the occupants of the three boats put together, who had fished the whole of the river.

Here was the result of patience and perseverance. Once, whilst fishing this same river in the gloaming, I secured a fly which, though perhaps not accurately



copied in the artificial specimen, turned out such a success for both trout and char that I have retained the very simple pattern ever since.

It happened in the following manner :—

On approaching an upper pool one evening I found the place perfectly alive with large trout, and we ran into a swarm of insects which were on the water, fluttered into the boat, and crawled all over ourselves. In the dim light they were difficult to distinguish, but appeared to be a sort of dun. I caught several, put them into a little case, and proceeded to cast with a small fly which apparently resembled the ones I had captured ; not a rise could I get, though the fish were madly breaking the water all round me, even under the rod.

It grew dark, and in despair I put on a small March brown which I had in my cap, immediately hooked a fish, which to my relief, for the tackle was the finest, rushed up stream and into the next pool. Seeing that he took this heavy rush of water, we knew he was a good one ; coaxing him down into his old haunt, I managed to keep him there. Gradually we edged the boat towards land, and eventually the boatman jumped out and rushed him up a shelving bank between the rocks, using his hat in the process, for we had no net large enough with us. This trout was in the pink of condition and weighed 5 lbs. to an ounce, and I have his picture with me now.

The flies secured that evening went home at once, carefully packed, to be imitated ; and the artificials came by return mail. They certainly did not resemble the originals very closely—very few artificials do—but these proved such killers upon occasions, with both trout and char, that, as remarked, I am never without them. And the best of it is that any one who has ever



PORTION OF A CHAR LAKE, LANDVERK, SWEDEN



MISS M. KENNEDY AND HER MORNING'S CATCH OF CHAR



tied a fly can make them, thus: Thinnest possible body of black floss silk, a small ruddy hackle which stands out, and only covers the body when wet, and a pair of wings from what bird I know not, nor does it matter as long as they consist of a very light smoky shade. The size of hook I find most successful is marked No. 4 in Carter's Catalogue.

I have used them as dry flies with cocked wings, but fished wet they have proved more efficacious. Experienced fishermen will know that because a fly may be a good one in some waters, it by no means follows that it will kill in others; yet I may be allowed to retain faith in this one, as it has been the means of considerably augmenting my bag both in Norway and Sweden. The "ingredients" are of the cheapest possible, for they may be found in any English home. To distinguish it, I called it the Indal moth, for want of a better name. Another fly that I "fathered" long ago is for salmon and grilse, or even large trout, made small. Black hackle at head, fiery red round the rest of the body, which may be composed of a quiet shade of yellow; wings from black and red feathers of the black cockatoo of Queensland, and topped with golden pheasant. I have sometimes been lucky with this fly when fishing for salmon in Norway, when the fish had refused the local flies; and when fishing the Nore in Ireland in years gone by, this gaudy specimen acted as a startler day by day, and woke up salmon which had paid but little attention to the lures they knew by heart.

#### THE CHAR

This lovely fresh-water fish is well behaved and of regular habits. The salt-water char is as handsome after his manner as the fresh-water species, with his

steely grey back and pink stomach. I have never fished specially for them, but in the Reisen and other Northern rivers have frequently taken them on a salmon fly. They are delicious eating and fierce fighters, as befits those fish, which, like a salmon, frequent both salt and fresh water. But I prefer to write of the first-named species.

Their habits are totally different from those of the trout, specially with regard to time and place of spawning. In four lakes that I can call to mind at the moment out of numerous others, they flock to a certain spot in shoal water during July, August, or September, according to the position and altitude of the lake, for the purpose of meeting and courting. Three of the lakes have in these chosen spots a bottom composed of a chaotic mass of moderate-sized rocks, whilst the bottom of the fourth is chiefly paved with sand. Then during sunny days, when the surface of the water is as glass, the char may be seen rising in scores and feeding on small flies.

The most beautiful fish are the males, which can be at once distinguished from the hen fish from the fact that the whole of the underneath part of their bodies consists of a lovely crimson, a most striking contrast to their olive-green backs, picked out with small white spots.

The stomach of the female is much more of a yellow red in colour.

I have seen the ladies of our party catch from four to six of these beautiful male fish, which seem to take the fly much more freely than the females, on a still hot morning; there were no small fish amongst them, most of them ranging from 2 lbs. to 2½ lbs. The sport was conducted in the following manner from the boat, which was lying motionless in the midst of the shoal.

A light split cane rod was used, to which was fixed a very small tortoiseshell reel, the line ending in a long collar of the finest gut with a floating black gnat at the tail of it; but to make up the bag, it saved time (and bear in mind that the first ripple caused by a light air would put them all down) to shift to an Indal moth or tiny double-hooked March brown, cast softly out over a rising fish, let the fly sink and draw very slowly towards one. Having hooked the char the little reel would scream with excitement as the fish made a long but dignified rush. All his movements in this calm water were somewhat lethargic, and he apparently showed no fear until he caught sight of the boat. The fascination lay in playing him with much gentleness on this lightest of tackle. Such mornings I look back to with the happiest feelings. It is fishing made easy, so peaceful, and so to speak, so soothing. Seldom does the sport last more than an hour or so, for the breeze is sure to spring up on these lakes sooner or later; but you have had a good time, as any one will allow when you lay out on the grass at your house or camp four or five of the loveliest fish in the world, weighing 8 or 10 lbs. They are as delicate and as good for food as they are beautiful to look at.

Thus it will be seen that the habits of the char are more regular, more obvious to the eye, than are those of trout, for the simple reason that they collect at certain periods on the shoal waters of a lake for the purpose of breeding, and in lakes with which one is acquainted they may be looked for with certainty every season in those spots.

I have always understood that the black gnat is the insect known as the "fisherman's curse," but there is a little fly not a third the size of this which I have met with in the north of Norway and also in Jemtland, Sweden.

It does not appear in successive years, sometimes missing a season. It has the shape and appearance of the common house fly, but its body is not larger than a pin's head. It rises in swarms, shows but little activity, crawls all about one, and covers the sedges at the water's edge till the green shoots are black.

This insect bites in a mild sort of way at times. I christened it "the curse" long ago for two reasons, one being that a swarm of them will, when fishing, settle on the face of the angler and get into his eyes, and the other that the trout will gorge themselves with the insect by shovelling them up on the surface of the water, so that if one examines a fish at this time of plague, the whole of its mouth and throat are found to be filled with a dense black mass of freshly swallowed "curse."

In one river I remember the large trout did not take the trouble to rise for this midge, and in the following way it may be said to have been proved:—

The "curse" was on one fine hot day, and the troutlets were filling themselves. I tried the very tiniest black flies I had, fished wet, but nothing would look at these. Continuing to cast mechanically amongst scores of these greedy youngsters, a good fish or two suddenly presented themselves, but took no notice of the "curse."

Carefully watching, I noticed that it was a March brown which they seized, some few of which had just appeared and were floating in a backwater. So putting on an artificial floater, I had the luck to take two trout, one after the other, and both weighing over a pound each. Now, neither of these fish had any of the "curse" inside it; they had declined my artificial flies fished wet, both those at all resembling the "curse" and others of various colours, but had at once risen to a

floating fly of larger dimensions and resembling the occasional one upon the water, so that here was another instance of the dry fly scoring, however little, for those were the only two I got during that morning which were worth keeping.

And now I have nearly come to the end of this simple discourse on fishing.

I try to keep to facts, and there is one small error I have crept into with regard to the *sikk*.

I have stated that this fish never takes a fly, for such has been my own experience, having lived on lakes which swarmed with them, but since jotting down that statement I have resumed acquaintance with Professor Landmark, than whom there is no better authority in matters connected with fish and anglers. He assures me that in one Norwegian lake *only* has he seen this fresh-water herring taken with fly, and that the angler lost many owing to their mouths being so tender.

I have taken three burbot only during all these years, and that was when the waters were in spate and I was bottom fishing for trout with bait.

I once also spent a whole day amongst the greedy pike in Norway. I happened to be bear hunting with a companion, but we were unlucky in our search for Bruin, though we sought him for three days with a first-rate bear-hound. There was a lake close to our farmhouse, and I asked the farmers whether there were trout in it. "No," they said, "but it is full of *gjedde*" (or pike).

I happened to have an old combination rod with me, but no artificial spinners, merely a couple of "Chapmans." The next thing was to procure small fish of some description to place on these.



Having noticed a tiny brook in the forest during our tramps, I proceeded there and saw troutlets rushing off the shallows. Then came back reminiscences of an old trick acquired over forty years ago when learning farming at Rainham in Norfolk. We pupils, when going the rounds, discovered a stream with plenty of good trout in it. This we immediately rented, and whilst some fished with worm in the wooded parts, others rushed the fish up the shallows, when they took refuge in faggots or under the banks. These were as good as in the bag, so proficient did we become in the gentle art. Another of our sportsmen all this time was lying prone on a small foot-bridge with his face glued to the openings between the boards. He would throw a blue-bottle fly up stream, and when it floated over a spot beneath his eye a trout would be sure to rise to it. A flash from a saloon pistol through the chinks, and that fish would drift down with a hole through his head!

It is indeed delightful to dwell on the past!

These little forest trout in Norway were simple beings, and their stream not being more than a foot or two broad soon supplied me with enough baits for the day. We caught many jack; the pool was full of them, and the farmers specially appreciated them. They also spent the day, which was Sunday, watching us and learning something of our mode of taking pike, for until then they had never seen fish taken by this manner of spinning, being in the habit of using night lines only.

I will close this discourse on fishing by giving a recipe for potting char, which I have practised successfully for many seasons—since 1882, when it was first sent me. Before that period I had applied to more than one British firm—in vain, though I wrote

fully stating the circumstances, and proving that I was not in the trade, but simply wanted to pot char which I caught in Norway. I was given evasive answers; in fine, they declined to part with this profound secret. So I turned to the *Field*, and received half-a-dozen recipes, one of which I have kept to, though I know them to be all good. And if any of my readers who know how to shift in the wilds, and can cook a bit, will try the following, they will not only please themselves but all their friends who wish to taste real char (*Salmo Alpinus*), properly prepared. Trout are pretty nearly as good, particularly if a fat red-fleshed one is chosen. In the annexed recipe there was one error. It read "bake for four hours," and this without remarking on either the size of the fish or temperature of the oven; so I have made the one alteration, having overcooked my fish the first time by following the original. I have several times since taken away with me upon expeditions two or three tins of char which I had potted; the clarified butter comes in also as another delicacy for outings, when one may be beyond the reach of good butter.

"TO POT CHAR OR TROUT (*A Westmorland Recipe*).

"Clean the fish, sprinkle them with black pepper and salt, lay them in a dish, and let them stand over the night. Then again scrape them well; put into each fish a seasoning of nutmeg, mace, white pepper, cayenne, and a very few cloves; lay the fish in a deep earthenware pan, cover them over with butter, and lay the heads of the fish on the top; bake them"—according to circumstances—"take out the back-bones and put some of the seasoning in their place; lay them in the potting pots and pour over them a little of the butter they have been baked in, free from the spice, which should first be allowed to settle; next day cover with clarified butter or suet."

There has been much discussion as to the scientific names for various char; following is the latest information which I have received on the subject.

“The common northern char is most often termed *S. Alpinus* by ichthyologists. It is migratory under certain circumstances. Naturalists have disputed hotly over the classification of the chars. Dr. Günther, for instance, mentions thirteen species, whilst a Scandinavian naturalist declares that there is only one species (*S. Alpinus*), with local varieties.”

As to kippers, this is a very simple matter. Writing of trout, I take one of 4 or 5 lbs., open him down the back, lay him flat in a large vessel, having cleaned him well, and at once rub in salt, pepper, and a little sugar, drain him off next day, and if for a fresh kipper, smoke him then over a smother of juniper leaves for a day and night, having kept him flat with little sticks.

Char the same, but as the flesh is most delicate, it must be carefully handled after smoking, or it will break. I brought home two lately so treated, weighing respectively 2 and 3 lbs. They were pronounced by a friend, an old Norwegian angler, as very good indeed; he treated them as “haddies”—and with cream sauce.

One small point I have overlooked in the foregoing which I should hardly have omitted in practice, and that is, always to take a miniature gaff when fishing in lakes. The average net is too small and weak, and a huge one is clumsy. With a little practice one can gaff a ½-lb. fish, and neatly too.

I learned the trick many years ago at Cromer.

The sea fishermen of that coast gaffed all their fish, simply using a large cod-hook, minus its barb. This was bound permanently to a long or short ash stick. This is the neatest system of bringing your spoil into the boat, and the fish is hardly marked by the small hook.

## CHAPTER XI

### SHOOTING

How to preserve Ryper—No Elk but many Birds—Norway exempt from Hydrophobia—Bears killing Sheep—Extraordinary Apathy of Farmers—"Baiting the Run"—The old Patriarch—His vivid Recollections of Hunting.

It is not my purpose to go into details connected with the slaying of what I may call the common game-bird of Norway—ryper. Every one knows them. Most sportsmen who visit that country have shot them. I have had first-rate sport with these birds on islands north of Tromsö, other islands south of this town, likewise over much of the mainland in both Sweden and Norway; I have assisted other guns at various resorts year after year, killing fifty and more brace a day over setters, at the opening of the season, during a year of plenty. But this was in the days of the dogs, and when birds were less worried than they are now, and though one can nowadays often hire or buy a "smell-dog" in Scandinavia that knows its work, the charm of pursuit has lessened, and I care but little now for the pursuit of ryper excepting under special conditions.

He is a grand bird, grander and more valiant in winter, when he is almost white. On the fjelds at the beginning of the season he is usually easily approached, and whole coveys are thus sometimes wiped out, but the finest shooting consists in the snap-shots which these birds afford in the birch scrubs.

I can honestly say that, when my mate or mates and myself have made large bags not a bird has been wasted.

The following short statement will show how we learnt a lesson in early times :—

A Norwegian officer and two of us had made a good bag in the district of the Nordfjord, and we two guns considered sufficient birds had been slain. "Why," said our friend, "we may shoot many more, and I shall preserve the whole lot." And he did, by partly cooking them in some small solid iron ovens which he had stored in the valley beneath. These birds, thus treated, kept well during the winter, and if anything improved in flavour. Upon several occasions afterwards we carried out this preserving system with the most satisfactory results. This explains how it is that one finds fresh game throughout the year in restaurants and hotels.

One of the latest periods in which I helped to make a good bag was when an old friend and myself rented an elk forest for the season. This was situated high up above the valley of the Gula.

As far as the elk were concerned it was a miserable failure, only a few very young bulls (one of which was shot by my mate for meat), and some cows being seen. But the fjelds were alive that year with ryper and ptarmigan. Therefore we settled down in our hut, which was situated at the edge of the forest, put aside the rifle, and devoted ourselves to gun and rod. There were plenty of small trout in a lake which lay close to the hut, and with numerous coveys of birds around, these diggings were not to be despised. Never before nor since have I seen the Northern lights in such perfection as I did on one memorable evening from our comfortable log cabin. The scin-

tillations of magnificent rosy and crimson streaks extending over the whole eastern horizon of the heavens was both marvellous and sublime.

Our two guns made heavy bags of birds, both ptarmigan and ryper, during the few weeks we remained on this high ground, a staunch little setter bitch aiding us greatly in the pursuit, and saving many a useless tramp by her long and careful ranging. We had previously made an arrangement with the farmer, by means of which none of these birds were wasted.

I suppose every one who goes to Norway in quest of game has heard the story of some Englishmen who shot ryper for days and left their bodies to rot upon the ground. I was once given names and places, but cannot answer for my authority. At the same time it should be borne in mind that "there is a fallacy known to logicians as generalisation from a single incident." A very true proverb, and *specially* applicable to the present day. As certain Norwegian sportsmen said, after hearing of this truly unsportsmanlike proceeding, "We shall make new laws to stop this kind of thing." That prophecy has been fulfilled, but not entirely to the advantage of those farmers who have been in the habit of letting their shooting to Englishmen.

But in the matter of prohibiting the importation of dogs into their country I consider that the Norwegians have acted rightly, considering that they have never known hydrophobia in any part of their kingdom, and naturally intend to keep it out by every means in their power. It was said that the Esquimaux dogs, also the elk-hounds, could not take this malady; but I was told that Pasteur had some sent over to Paris, and proved that these northern breeds

were as amenable to this horrible disease as any other canines.

With regard to game licences, I only once took one out, and that was when I revisited some old friends in Hedemarken of late years, when I found I had to pay one hundred kroner to the Lendsmand before I could even shoot a duck. Though I bagged a few head of game, I found my old haunts swept pretty clean of both fur and feather; whilst the streams were nearly emptied owing to the raids of native visitors, who killed the fish in every unsportsmanlike way possible, and who, worst of all, made a business of it by bringing kegs with them, into which they salted their fish, and finally returned with the spoil to their respective townships. I caused the farmers to put advertisements in the local papers, with a view to putting a stop to this indiscriminate slaughter in their own lakes and rivers, and though they acted on this advice, the harm had been done, and for many years this portion of the Amt may be "written off."

To this same district long ago, when trout were plentiful in the waters, when ducks and other waterfowl thronged the streams and creeks, and when deer and winged game were to be had for the shooting, I came in the first days of March. My chief object was the hope that I should find a bear in one of the high valleys of the district, March being the month usually chosen by Bruin in that part of the country to emerge from his winter quarters, or *hi*. But I must retrace a bit in this narrative.

During previous summers I had kept much to one special valley in Hedemarken, making my headquarters at a particular farm, where, indeed, I left guns, tents, and other gear from year to year, and during every season of my stay rumours would be brought of sheep



or calves being killed in distant parts of the district by the "king of the woods." But during the summer of which I am now writing, Master Bruin put in an appearance, or rather gave ample proof that he did not mean to neglect us, first by killing five sheep one night up at the sæter of the farm, which was four miles from headquarters and up on the fjelds, and a few nights afterwards by digging a calf out of its shelter, partially eating it, and severely lacerating other members of the herd which were grazing in the woods next day. These were only saved from being killed outright by the pluck of the old bull in charge. But it will scarcely be credited that, though this all-round slaughter was taking place, the owners of the stock never mentioned the fact until several days had elapsed.

One Sunday, when perhaps he had time to think, an old farmer friend sauntered up to me and remarked quite casually, "The bear got five of our sheep." "When?" I asked. "Oh, last Thursday." In every case did they thus delay giving the news—a hospitable, but slow and lethargic lot of men they were—so that by the time I reached the different places where the massacres had taken place all scent had gone, and the hound which accompanied me could make nothing of it, though fleeces, hair, and blood lying about showed too well the places where the victims had been killed. This was evidently the work of two bears, judging by the old spoor, or tracks, which we found. These old men seemed to care nothing for their losses, and there was no sense of sport in them. It was most exasperating. In despair I worked the woods all around, accompanied by one of the young farmers and the bear-dog, without result, excepting probably scaring the marauders away, for they did not put in an appearance again that summer.

The quiet valley had resumed its peaceful sway, when one day a messenger arrived from a farm five miles up to say that wolves had killed several sheep the night before. This was better; the promise of a reward had sharpened up the wits of the flock owners.

Now, I know so far about wolves and their habits that I had shot six good-sized cubs, of an average weight of 50 lbs. each, on the fields of the Reisen River, having cut them off from their den, and had also accompanied the Lapps when they went to set their wolf-traps—or rather, to look at them and seek for spoor—for putting out a trap for these artful beasts means a very long business; the trap must be left unset for many days for the animals to get accustomed to it, before it is really set to catch. I had also been with them when they left pieces of flesh about, poisoned with strychnine, but so inexperienced were they, or such a poor sample of the poison did they use, that the wolves, having eaten it, invariably cast it up and got away.

Knowing, then, that there would be very little chance of seeing a wolf so as to get a shot, I prepared some baits in the way we do for dingoes in Queensland, and, locking up the hound, accompanied the messenger back to the farm, where I met his old father and told him of the plan I intended to carry out, adding that he had better shut up his dog. To which remark he made answer that he “did not the least mind his dog being poisoned, for that it had deserted the sheep and run home.” The old man evidently was unaware that a dog presents a tasty and juicy morsel for a wolf. However, he ended by locking his animal up.

The scene of this struggle looked ghastly. Besides several of these poor little Norwegian sheep being

killed and mutilated, we found one poor beast alive, but disembowelled, some fifty yards from the others. Having put it out of its misery I left the farmer to gather up the remains and started right away for some distant cliffs, dragging behind me, attached to a cord, a bunch of entrails. Having placed the kidney-fat baits at the foot of the cliffs in places far apart, and raised a powerful smell on the same spot by burning the entrails, which had been dragged there, to a cinder, I went home, and next day sent a description and rough sketch of the place where the farmer had to seek for a dead wolf.

I heard nothing for a week, when the man appeared in a highly excited state and told me with much talk that he had found two wolves, and that they were both blown up and smelling, but that I should still get the Government reward. I told him that he might take that, but that I had hoped to get their skins and now they were spoilt. Why had he not gone out directly he received the letter?

He had "put the letter aside and forgotten all about it till several days had elapsed." However, he was so overjoyed at being able to claim the reward, that I said no more about it. In such a way do the farmers in these out-of-the-way valleys try one—namely, by their terrible lack of "go" in matters of this kind.

Before I parted from my hosts that summer I enjoyed most interesting talks with the old patriarch who owned the farm. A striking figure he was, with his grand and rugged features; his age was ninety, and he had been stone blind for many years. This grand old man occupied himself up to the last days of his life in the only way possible, and it was easy to find him on hearing the "thud, thud" of his small axe in

the barn loft, as he employed his time cutting up bark for tanning purposes. As I approached him, he would say "Good day, you are the Englishman." Then I would sit down and let him yarn.

I can see him now in his red woolly nightcap, two silvery wisps of hair appearing on each side from under this covering, as he put down his axe and spoke:—

"Yes, they tell me you know our mountains well about here; then you will be acquainted with the great plain near Rausjökletten; did you not kill a deer there last year?" *Note.*—Here comes in the *jo* instead of *ja* in answering this negative question in Norwegian. "On that plain I am told you may these days see two deer, or three or four at the most. You remember how the mountains and precipices shut in that stretch of country? Yes; well, fifty or sixty years ago this country was quite full of reindeer, both sides of this valley, and in that plain they used to gather also, five or six hundred and more at a time. Then we farmers would gather together, some thirty or more men; each man had his rifle, and we would advance under cover and surround them till they did not know which way to run, whilst we would send shot after shot into the flock. A great number would try to escape by the passes, and here we had other men waiting for them. Then we would put the slain on sledges and bring them back to this valley."

"And did not many escape wounded?" I asked.

"Very few," said the old man; "we followed them up with dogs and got most of them within a day or two."

The conversation then turned upon the subject of bears.

"Yes, there were plenty of them in those old days,"

he said ; “ an old man I knew wrote a little paper book which I will give you ; you will see that he killed over a hundred bears during his lifetime. There are not many now, but they have visited this valley lately ; you should come again in early spring, and hunt them when they come out of their winter quarters.”

## CHAPTER XII

### NORWAY IN MARCH

A Farm-dog Pointer—First *Ski* Lesson—"Trofast"—Ambrosial Punch—An old "Chestnut"—*Skarve* or Ptarmigan—Fishing through the Ice—Old friend Peder.

So when the spring-time came I crossed to Norway during the early days of March, determined to embrace the opportunity to learn what I could of running on *ski*, so as to get myself into condition. It was a glorious week when I arrived, and the sledging over the great lakes and valleys superb. The cold on these high lands was dry and wholesome, and not a chilblain in it.

As I found out the simple trick of employing a farmyard dog of the country to find game, I will detail the method employed, and describe how the dog was handled so as to bring the gunner up to birds, before detailing our quest after bear.

The first part of our sledge journey took us through a forest of snow-clad pines and then out and away over the lakes, spinning round islands where in previous summers we had likewise spun for trout great and small. The sun shone gloriously, not a sound broke the silence save the gentle humming of the sledge-runners as we sped mile after mile over the dense mass of blue ice, faintly sprinkled, as it was, with a coating of fine snow.

Towards evening, as we were approaching the out-run of the last of a chain of lakes, the driver's dog,

who had been with us the whole time trotting along in front of the horse, suddenly cocked his prick ears to a greater elevation, if that were possible, and, darting off at a tangent to the extent of several hundred yards, began barking, and put up a flock of ducks from a reedy mire at the edge of the lake.

“He always does that,” remarked my companion, whose name was Knut, with a chuckle. But with English notions I took a serious view of the matter, and explained that if his beast of a dog had not acted in this manner I could have got out the gun and perhaps have bagged a fat duck for supper. Wild fowl in these districts were not afraid of a man, as I had often proved before. The Norwegian farmer’s ways, with some brilliant exceptions, are not our ways in the matter of shooting, nor are his bird dogs our dogs; yet a little later this one proved a useful ally when put into harness, as I will shortly explain.

I could not have had a better place than the farm at which we arrived at nightfall for taking my first lessons on *ski*. It was situated in a broad valley some thousands of feet above the sea. On one side ran, or rather froze, the river, by the side of which it was built, whilst on the other a broad track had been cut through the forest for miles. This was for the most part level, but began with a long and steep fall near the farm. On the morning after our arrival Knut brought out several pairs of “shoes” of various lengths, ranging from children’s sizes to—nines, we will call them, for these latter were nine feet long. By his advice I tried on a medium-sized pair which he strapped on my feet, and then giving me an iron-shod staff wished me a “pleasant tour.” It wasn’t.

All the farm folk had turned out to witness the start; so, assuming as dignified an air as possible, I

slid off slowly and cautiously. As long as the road was level all went well, in spite of uncalled-for attempts on the part of my feet to lift themselves from the snowy track. The unusual exercise proved very warming, and I looked forward with pleased anticipation to the steep hill or fall in the ground when, with reckless speed and without further exertion, I should fly down, the observed of all observers.

I did fly down, but head foremost, and the header certainly did not lack exercise, for at the very beginning of the descent one of my long shoes "took charge" and made for the forest, while slithering down the glassy surface, the other seven-leagued slipper was playing havoc with small fir-trees overhead, so that I disappeared in a kind of snowstorm. I tried to dig my fingers in and put on the drag, but the surface of the snow was too hard.

Luckily it was banked up softer at the bottom, and the first stoppage I was aware of was caused by my head and shoulders being rammed into this cold buffer. Lying still—I could not do otherwise—I could hear that wretched Knut and his cousins and his aunts yelling with laughter at the erratic descent of the Englishman; whilst the "beast," or, to give him his proper name, Trofast, was jumping around me and barking at the unwonted sight.

Finding it impossible to get on my legs for the moment, I cleared the snow from my face and thought to indulge in conversation, even to quote a little Shakespeare—"The hollow laugh proclaims the vacant mind"—but found myself unequal to the translation. The good folk speedily released me from my appendages, and then Knut showed me "how 'twas done." Climbing back to the top of the hill, he put on my *ski* and glided gracefully at top speed down the descent



to the sharpest part, and by means of his staff brought up just where he wished to. After a few more trials on a very gentle slope I just managed to hold my own—sometimes. In going uphill I tried to copy my mentor, but kept constantly treading my elongated heels one on the other, or making similar false steps, so that up to the very last I found it more simple, more saving of wind, to resort to the undignified process of shouldering my runners up ascents, but fully appeased my conscience for this failure of perseverance by forgetting all errors in any successful downward rush on the other side. And now to return to the dog.

We dressed him up in the harness belonging to a bear-dog. If this is properly made, the animal pulls from the chest only. This obviates the choking sounds which proceed from his throat if the line is fastened to his collar. They all tug lustily, do these native dogs, as every Norwegian sportsman knows. Their keen sense of smell is marvellous, and Trofast proved equal to the best. As he had run riot all his life, his master took him in hand to lead him about in harness. In a short time he had become accustomed to it, and we started.

The first birds which our "pointer" dragged us up to proved to be ducks, where we, indeed, expected to find them. Nearly hauling Knut off his legs, he forged up-wind towards some rushes which were growing at the edge of the river, whilst I followed on *ski*—for the place was close to the farm and the way was flat.

Before coming within shot of the pool, the farmer stopped and muffled his dog's head with his great skin gauntlets, as Trofast was given to barking, especially when on his special fancy—ducks; so unslinging my

gun and sliding ahead I managed to stop a couple of these as they got up, and nearly lost my balance directly afterwards. One of the birds was a mallard, which it was a treat to see in all his smart drake's plumage, as during all late summer and autumn seasons we had found that the male birds of this species had assumed the female dress.

Shortly after this, Trofast drew—perhaps “dragged violently up” would better describe his action—towards some rocky broken ground. I had just time to get rid of my leg encumbrances when we descried ryper running in all directions, clad in their beautiful white plumage which was marked here and there with a chocolate-coloured feather, denoting the approaching change to their full summer dress. Having bagged a brace of these, and directly afterwards a white hare, we sat down to smoke and refresh. Whilst Knut made a fire I stamped about, for the tightness of the *ski* straps had benumbed my feet.

At this point I shall dwell for a brief space, for the purpose of offering a recipe for one of the best drinks which we shared on this and many subsequent occasions. Whoever tastes it will bless the inventor of such ambrosial punch, whoever he may be. I copied the following long ago:—

“Pour three quarts of whiskey into an earthenware jar (or vessel with a cover), with two pounds of loaf sugar, the rind and pulp and juice of twelve lemons (none of the whites or pips), and a pint of boiling milk. Let it stand for eight days, stirring it once a day, then strain it through filtering material. This drink will be best after twelve months' keeping.”

Personally I prefer it made with half the quantity of sugar.

In this out-of-the-way district I shot the place

very lightly, merely requiring game for my own consumption, as neither my farmer friend nor his family cared for birds, and only kept their feathers to stuff their bedding with. Anything I got went at once into the ice-house, where it would have kept good for weeks.

One day, owing to the fact of a cold north wind blowing, the snow proved to be frozen to an unusual degree (it was *spegt*, to use the local term of the district), and a small calamity befell me. Trofast had winded duck, and I was proceeding down a long sloping bank to the spot when I became aware that my *ski* were running away with me, and, having discarded my stick, felt myself powerless to stop. As I flew at railway speed past Knut he held out his staff, but I only pulled him over, and the next minute plunged on to the icy channel of the river, slipping along till some boulders brought me up. The thick fur clothing saved any serious contusions, but one of my *ski* was smashed.

Mr. Canute, to give him the English rendering of his name, was close after me with my gun, and, bringing up in beautiful form on the bank, asked me if I was hurt. On my answering "No; but I shall sit on a soft rock and smoke a pipe, as it was hard falling," he remarked, "Do so, and I will tell you a story to encourage you. You should have had your *ski* shod with the skin of a well-trained dog (of course, you noticed the two ryper you nearly ran over)." At this point I recognised the good old Norske "chestnut" which was coming. "For there was once a sportsman here in Norway whose favourite stop-dog died, whereupon he had his *ski* shod with its skin to remind him of his old friend. Imagine, then, his astonishment, when, upon ap-

proaching some bushes one day, these *ski* gradually slowed down and then stopped altogether. Looking down, he saw a pack of ryer squatting at his feet. Nothing would move his *ski*, and so unnerved was he that he got out of them and walked quickly home."

I find, upon referring to my notes, that the best day's sport we had that season, shooting to Trofast, was on the highest slopes of an adjacent mountain. The dog very soon winded *skarver*, the Hedemarken word for ptarmigan. The first covey which got up joined a second, all alighting amongst the bare, stony ground which extended in every direction. Having succeeded in breaking up this pack of birds, we soon heard them calling all around us, and the dog finding them in twos and threes amongst the rocks and snow, "shooting made easy" was the result. As the farmer wanted the family pillows stuffed at that time, and likewise announced his intention of preserving the birds by the partial cooking system, all possible shots were taken. No wounded birds got away on such ground. Trofast brought us within sight of all.

By adopting the simple plan I have detailed the dog proved a useful pointer of game, never failing, never tiring, and I have shot to him and others of his breed since that period, often during the autumnal months when no snow was on the ground. It will be obvious to the eye of a sportsman that the system has some drawbacks, and birds are sometimes lost in rank grass and scrubby country. But it is better for the man who likes to change his ground to use these native dogs, which can be found anywhere, than to go to the expense of keeping English-bred animals in Norway through the winter. Some, here and there, are gun-shy, therefore test them before

starting out for the day's shooting, and always let them be handled by their own master.

To my mind, a winter season—at all events, a portion of it—can be pleasantly passed in the circumstances which I have detailed. The farmers, as we all know, are a kindly and hospitable race of men. The clergy of the country are a hard-working, broad-minded, and intellectual class of gentlemen, ever ready to show kindness and hospitality to the stranger, and to assist him in the matter of finding sport.

For curiosity I tried to see whether trout or grayling would run or rise in a partially frozen stream which I knew was full of them, but they probably remained in the "steadies" of the water over which was solid ice, as I saw nothing of them. While I was fishing, a water ouzel perched himself on a snowy bank above me, and sang the sweetest song imaginable the whole time I was there. I had often seen these birds in the summer, but had never heard them sing before.

One day I went with the men to see them fishing through the ice with hook and line. This was on a lake. They were provided with worms, which they had kept all through the winter, and thin strips of veal. It was nearing Easter, the *Paaske Tid* of the Norwegians, and a very good period it is for those who like to live on the fat of the land, as, the cows being still confined to the byre, unlimited cream is at your door; whilst the farmers also at this time kill many calves, and as a result, small, delicate veal is plentiful.

I found upon arriving at the lake that the men had already cut holes through the three feet of ice which covered it. Sitting on old bags, or a bit of timber, and letting their hand lines down, they patiently



A FORMER FAVOURITE STREAM - VIEWED IN MARCH



fished for several hours, but I thought the result poor—some dark, poorly nourished trout and a couple of *lake* (pronounced *larker*). This is a bottom-feeding fish, excellent for the table, and its English name is burbot.

A sharp frost was now setting in, and it was time to think of the bears. Peder, one of the sons of the old patriarch, was to accompany me, an old companion and friend who had been with me before on many occasions, in foul weather and fair; a powerfully built little man, with sandy hair, and much resembling certain Scotch gillies I have known, honest, persevering; an individual who spoke but little, yet what he did say, on the subjects of sport or locality, was to the point.

Whilst he and I were discussing the prospects of our little expedition, a Lapp suddenly made his appearance, and said that the *graaben* or wolves were worrying his reindeer, and that he required help to drive them off or kill them in some way. We told him that we were not going to the fjelds on his side of the valley, but that we would be prepared to deal with them in the district to which we were bound, and that as their tracks crossed the valley in more than one place, we had some chance of coming across them. Peder said that the snow was good *före*, a word for which there is no equivalent in English, but it may be put down as "good going," which in this case meant walking.



## CHAPTER XIII

In Quest of Bruin on his quitting his Winter Quarters—Glorious Snow—Sigurd, the Bear-hound—Spoor—Tasty Horse—Tracking—Ants' Nests—*Tryer*—Gathering Fuel—Sigurd the Robber—*Kva*—"Gift" for the Wolves—Last of the Bears—Winter School only—Geese—*Scolopax Major*—Raid on Wolf Cubs—A Lost Chance—Ghastly Traps.

EARLY one beautiful morning, accompanied by the bear-hound, we started for our three hours' climb up the mountain to reach the fjelds. I had a rifle slung on my back; each of us carried a knapsack containing provisions, and a staff apiece. It was our intention to camp the first night at an empty hut. At this time of year all sæters and huts on the fjelds were of course unoccupied, and the whole of these high regions deserted, excepting that on one side of the valley there were a few wandering Lapps. On the day following we thought to make a lumberer's camp, on returning by another route to headquarters.

Very invigorating and delightful it was for the first few hours, climbing upwards through a great pass over the hard snow in our blue spectacles; without these the refraction of the sun's rays on the white carpet would have been unbearable. The only sign of life we saw, the only sound we heard, was when a flock of ryper ran out of our way, calling to each other as we passed them. At length, after a couple of rests to indulge in light refreshment and a smoke, we reached the plateau.

And what a beautiful and wonderful scene met

our eyes, where "silence reigned supreme"! It was common enough, of course, to Peder, but as for myself, I had never been at this highest elevation before, with snow for miles all round me, pure untouched virgin snow, whose dazzling whiteness extended to the horizon, excepting that in some few places a snowy mountain blocked the distant view. All the foreground was one solid smooth sheet, without, so far, a track upon it. Indeed, it would have taken a heavy animal to leave its spoor on this pure carpet, which was tightly packed, and consisted of coarse granulated particles.

We held for the upland valley of Spekedalen, leaving the great conical-topped mountain of Elgepiggen on the left. It was a long tramp across this plain before we came to the more undulating country in which we should find our hut, but the travelling was level and thus easy, shod as we were in the light Lapp boots, or *komagers*, as we called them.

Towards evening, as we were approaching our night quarters, Sigurd, the hound, who had been quietly trotting along like any well-trained drover's dog, suddenly seemed to swell with wrath and excitement, as, with head erect and hackles up, he sniffed the "tainted gale." Peder at once clapped the harness on to the beast's back, and was swiftly dragged up to the huge plate-like tracks of a bear, printed deeply in the snow, the sun having somewhat thawed the surface of this, whilst the weight of the animal had caused it to break through the crust. It had come apparently straight from the spot we intended to camp in, and had we been but an hour earlier we must have viewed it from the plain, for the spoor was quite fresh. Whither had he gone? He was evidently heading for the lower slopes of the valley.

Now was Peder as excited, and yet as quiet, as the hound. At first he was for following on at once—a plan in which I most cordially acquiesced; but the more experienced mountaineer, after looking steadfastly around, said, as we stood thus on the slopes of Elgepiggen, “No; we must to the hut, and get in wood before it is too late. See! there is a black snow-storm coming round the peak.”

Now, had I been rash enough to have made this trip by myself, and foolish enough to have followed that bear, I should have been “bushed,” and in a very tight place indeed, owing to the adversity of the elements, as I think the sequel will clearly prove.

Another half-hour and we had gained the log cabin, and after breaking open the door, commenced the work of getting in fuel. And what huge old dead trunks of trees did my companion bear on his brawny shoulders, whilst I struggled in his footsteps with—well, quite as much as I could manage! The pile of timber increased outside the cabin door till I thought there was sufficient for a couple of days. “It will barely last the night,” remarked Peder, as he clambered over a slight rise in the ground. On looking to see where he had gone, I found him digging like a rabbit, and eventually he disappeared under the snow. As he afterwards explained, it was to get at running water, and he knew where to tap the rivulet.

The storm was now upon us, and we closed the hut door and made all snug, lit the fire, boiled coffee, and roasted sausages on pointed sticks. Perhaps a roughish sort of picnic, but the little abode was soon filled with an aroma pleasant to hungry men. “I never knew you had sausages,” I remarked to my mate. “They taste very good.” “Yes,” he replied feelingly, as he tore one between his teeth, “they are made from that

favourite horse your wife used to ride in former days. Ja; he was very fat."

Our hut was 10 feet by 6; two wooden bunks, one on each side, containing some very lumpy and mouldy hay constituted our berths. We turned in late, Peder having many plans to discuss; he also informed me that, when gathering wood, he had noticed the tracks of wolves under the scanty fir trees around the hut.

The night passed—well, not very "softly." There was a deal of tobacco consumed, and the fire was replenished on the stone hearth every hour or so. The storm howled, and towards morning it got mightily cold, and nearly all the wood was burnt. Sigurd slept without a turn, and there was simply a great mound of fur in one position the whole night through on Peder's bunk. Stepping out at length, we found that the snow had ceased falling, after half burying our hut, and that frost had set in. Peder espied and shot a white hare with the smooth-bore whilst I was getting a rub over with snow by way of a matutinal tub. As soon as the skin was off the hare, we roasted the loin whilst the flesh was still hot; it proved tender and juicy. The night had passed cheerfully enough, though there was not much idea of sleep, for between the periods of feeding the fire, Peder related many exciting stories connected with winter on the fjelds. One yarn, which was corroborated later by one of the principals concerned, was where my companion had acted as guide across the fjelds one stormy night to a party of men, and was the only one who escaped frost-bite.

This camp was rough, but it was perfect luxury to what followed.

After stamping out the fire, we breasted the hill

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back to the bear's spoor, and here found ourselves outside the track of the storm. So local was it that no fresh snow had fallen on to this higher ground. The sun again shone brilliantly, and we felt in high spirits. I only was vexed at the bear's having had such a long start, but Peder said, "He will not go straight at first, but will seek for food, as he is only just out of his *hi*," or winter quarters—and so it proved. That bear had twisted and turned in every possible manner to dig out ants' nests. How he found them it was impossible to tell, as snow was over all, but the black soil had been dug out by the powerful paws in numerous spots, each one being covered with infuriated ants whose nests had been simply delved out. On more than one occasion Bruin had gone off at a tangent, and taken a frozen rype out of a horse-hair snare where the bird had remained from the previous autumn. The beast's nose must have been extraordinary, winding, when there was presumably no wind, a frozen bunch of little more than feathers. Once he had turned off at right angles to get a mummified bird a hundred yards away. Sometimes, when crossing a marshy bit under the trees, his heavy body had forced his legs through the snow, when every claw came out clear and distinct. At length his tracks tended up towards the actual peak of the mountain away from the timber, and I took the hound from the spoor, as Peder had to cut steps for himself in an icy cliff with his axe, telling me to meet him farther along, as the bear was sure to come down again. And so it had, as explained by Sigurd, before I could see the trail it had made.

Peder then joined me, and we paused for a smoke. For the last hour we had found our progress difficult. The wind had changed, and was fast thawing the

snow, and my companion begged me to smoke on whilst he made some *tryer*—Peder thus spelt it—for our feet. How shall I describe this form of snow-shoe? He cut birch rods and bent each into an oval—four of them, each 18 inches by 10; inside these he plaited smaller rods, so that one stood on a sort of flat basket-work when one put them on the feet. This work took him nearly an hour—an unlooked-for delay, but it was obvious that this was the only means of getting along. Having donned our basket-work, my mate bade me follow in his steps.

At first we were borne up bravely, but getting on to a slope which bore another aspect, we found the snow getting worse and worse.

At last, what with sinking to the knees at every step, fastenings coming undone, caused by the violent drawing up the foot for another plunge, and half-blinded with perspiration, Peder gave it up, and begged me to be seated. No difficult matter this; I had only to “founder” with both feet together. “We cannot go on, impossible to get back to the hut,” he said, whilst proceeding to cut up some pig-tail tobacco; “we must sleep here to-night; do not leave this place; sit and smoke; I will seek a better spot under the fir trees.”

Sigurd, who had been refreshing himself with a quantity of snow, sat up beside me with his short ears cocked, gazing wistfully into a valley on our right, in which direction the tracks of Bruin distinctly led, but his journey had taken place when the snow was hard.

Presently Peder came back.

“I have found four fir trees standing together,” said he; “there will we lie. Place your feet in the holes I have made, and follow me.”

With much plunging we arrived at his roosting-

place, kicked off our *tryer*, and began to scrape away the snow, which under the canopy of firs was little more than a foot deep. Then commenced the getting in of logs, and if I had been surprised at the quantity of fuel gathered at the hut, still more was I now astonished to find that, after having piled up sufficient to represent an ordinary haystack, Peder said, "We shall want nearly as much again." Evening came on apace, and with it frost, rendering it slightly easier to bring in the last loads.

Had there been a moon, we might now have been able to follow the bear. After a time the stars shone out, and though the whole scene was grand and beautiful at first, another sensation soon presented itself, for the cold grew intense, and, after the late violent exercise, one felt it doubly, and as the huge bonfire lit up, it had the effect of stirring up every bird and beast in the forest on the borders of which we were encamped, so that the hitherto calm and silent night was changed into one in which weird screams, howls, and hoots prevailed, which seemed to mock us in our enforced camp.

It was, indeed, a relief to know that I had such a cool-headed and experienced young native as my companion alongside me. Without wishing to exaggerate, I can safely affirm that, sensitive as I am to ordinary cold, I should probably never have got out of that camp without him. He simply took the whole thing as a matter of course, and made the best arrangements for my comfort.

Neither of us during this early portion of the night felt hungry, but we drank quantities of coffee cooked in snow water, yarned, smoked, and discussed the situation. We had no overcoats nor blankets—no covering of any kind—and the snow melting from the

heat of our fire rained down from the branches of the fir trees.

Peder reckoned that this fire, which roared up to a great height, would scare the bear out of the country, but on the other hand would bring back any prowling wolf to see what had been left at the camp. This he said, was only a guess on his part; and, as it proved, it was a wrong one.

Getting at length sleepy, I stretched out with my face to the fire, only to wake up, after a troubled doze, with loss of feeling in back, legs, and feet. As I scrambled up to restore circulation, there was Peder sleeping away from the fire, like any infant—excepting that he snored like a hog. “Peder,” I shouted, “my side next the fire gets roasted whilst the other is frozen.” “Do not sleep,” answered he, rubbing his eyes; “it is dangerous. You are not used to this; I must walk you about.”

Jumping up, he seized me by the collar, and ran me up and down the limited space which we had cleared, urging me to further efforts with violent smacks and shakings. After I could feel my legs a bit, he counselled me to keep moving for some time longer. This was beginning to get rough on me—sleepy and tired, and yet doomed to do “sentry go” apparently all night. But my good-hearted mate did his best. He eventually made me lie down between two fires which he had prepared; but here again was I done, for the fear of being set alight by brands which were falling about everywhere kept me awake, and when at length these had burnt down into a safer position, and I was “going off,” my feet froze. There was no help for it, and getting up once more, I trod the charmed circle.

Then I thought of a snow bed, knowing that the



Lapps frequently scraped a hole in the snow, crept in, covered it all over their bodies and heads, and so kept hot—to the extent of perspiring, so they averred.

I stole outside the camp, only to find the snow as hard and frozen as my boots. How the owls hooted at me as I left the fire, and oh! how I longed for the mosquito-stricken bush, or even the swamps of tropical Queensland!

There was Peder fast asleep again, and the faithful hound lying on his knapsack, which seemed crushed as flat as a pancake. Presently the former woke up quite lively; certainly his cheerfulness kept my spirits up, and while stamping about, I found myself getting quite interested in one of his many stories of adventure—another cheerful one, by the way—how he and three of his comrades on this same fjeld lost their way during mid-winter in a snowstorm, eventually arriving at the farmhouse in the lower valley, half dead from exposure. He had had many bad times, but always brought his party out right.

Somewhere about 4 A.M. Peder sat up and uttered an exclamation, "Look at the smoke, a soft wind, it is thawing." Good? nothing of the sort, alas! The wind had shifted once more; this probably meant that we should be prisoners another day, possibly another night.

"Never mind," said my comrade, seeing that I took this as bad news, "let us eat. But how is this?"—finding his knapsack flattened out—"empty!" And there sat that noble hound gazing valiantly in the direction taken by the bear, but disdainingly to look at us as we searched around.

Presently Peder picked up a section of the foot and claws of a white hare—we had packed up most of the little animal when we left the hut. We offered

this to Sigurd; he declined even to smell it, but the size of his stomach told a tale. Peder told him that he had done a very mean thing, and that before we starved we should eat *him*.

I had a small quantity of odds and ends left, having used my haversack for a pillow; these scraps we soon ate up, when Peder said, "Let us collect some *kva*, there is plenty up this tree."

*Kva* (pronounced *kvar*) must not be confounded with the ordinary turpentine secretions found on most fir trees. It is a comparatively tasteless gum, a lump of which you may chew for hours and get no forrader, and is somewhat rare. I never swallowed any, and doubt if the natives do; my mate said that it kept his teeth in perfect order. Anyhow, I bit it savagely, and thought of the departed bear.

The exercise of climbing a couple of trees caused the blood to circulate and did good. "We must now give up all thoughts of bears and wolves," quoth Peder, "and get away home the first hour the snow will let us."

Meantime we constructed a sort of wigwam, cutting off the thick "needled" branches of fir trees with our axes and piling masses of snow around them.

Peder was a first-class shot at anything on the ground, and taking the gun he started off foraging. There were plenty of birds about, and he came back within the hour with a blackcock and a brace of ptarmigan, for two cartridges expended.

Another dreary period passed, but the longest night does have a morning, and with a large fire in front of our shelter the situation was rendered more endurable.

Peder turned out to prospect while yet the stars were out, and came quickly back to say that the snow

was *spegt*, and that therefore we could travel. This was the very best news indeed; but I know men—English hunters of those days—in Norway, who would have followed that bear from that moment, food or no food, and would have slept on his tracks till they sighted him.

Before we started, my companion suggested my making up a bait of “gift” and leaving it in our camp with burnt feathers around so as to attract any wandering wolf. Then, through the semi-darkness we took a bee-line to the valley. We could hear the grouse crowing around us as we proceeded, but could not see to shoot. Once we stopped to cook coffee, the only fuel procurable, on a vast treeless fjeld, being rotten ling half buried in snow; however, we managed to get a warm drink.

After much plunging through drifts, shod once more with the *tryer*, for the snow was again becoming soft, we reached the farm late in the afternoon, tired and footsore; but a hot bath, followed by some sixteen hours’ sound sleep, refreshed me. Peder all this time was amusing himself making new hurdles in the farmyard for the approaching hay season, also roughly cutting out a pair of *ski* to season, ready for the postman in the autumn.

The weather was now breaking up, and I had to depart at once. As it was, Peder and I had a memorable journey to reach civilisation some thirty miles away. It took us eight hours to perform the distance, the pony continually floundering in the melting snow, and we had to free him and drag the sledge many times till we got to a harder bit before we could harness up again. Another few days and I should have been cut off altogether for weeks.

And now comes the sad part of the story, sad be-

cause the brown bear of Norway is a grand and harmless beast, and if he must be killed it should be done in a sportsmanlike manner. Soon after my arrival at home I received a bear-skin, also a letter from Peder, from which I quote the following :—

“GOOD FRIEND KENNEDY,—I went to our old camp as soon as the frost permitted, and when I had nearly reached the spot I saw a dark mass lying near the place where we made the fire. When I got to it there lay the remains of a bear; all its stomach had been eaten out, and so the skin, you will find, is torn. Another bear had eaten this one, and his spoor I traced for a long way, but had to come home-wards as night was coming on. It had taken me a long time to get off this skin, which I now send.”

Sad to relate, this other bear was found dead during the ensuing summer, and in a state of decay. He had evidently eaten the entrails of the poisoned one, and swallowed the same bait, which had not affected him until he had travelled a mile, for it was at this distance from the old camp that the herd-boy found him.

The farmers were in high glee at the discovery of the remains of two sheep-killers, and, to my disgust, some one inserted a letter in the local paper stating the particulars, and praising the man who had been the means of ridding them of these raiders. Then a Christiania newspaper took the matter up, and, mentioning me by name, very properly said that it was not a sportsmanlike act. However, a Norwegian friend rendered me a good service by publishing a letter in the *Dagblad*, fully setting forth an account of the whole transaction as I have stated in the foregoing narrative—which letter I have always kept.

No sheep nor cattle have been killed by beasts in

the valley since that date. One fact I was reminded of before quitting this winter tour, and that was that all the children attended school during the winter months only—an admirable system which might well be copied at home. During the summer these sturdy Norwegian bairns are helping their parents, during the whole season, at haymaking, herding the quiet cattle and sheep, and such light work. We met several little dots *ski-ing* to school on their tiny snowshoes, which bore their light little bodies well up on the surface, whilst we were relieving our foundered sledge.

I never specially looked for any rare birds during my summer and autumn trips, being more intent upon the game proper, but it was very pleasant, when camped in one's tent at the edge of a pine forest, to hear in the early morning the long clear whistle of the black woodpecker—to steal out, and after a bit stalking find him pitched on the top of a spruce, saluting the rising sun. In this way I have shot and preserved—for I always carried arsenical soap with me—some grand specimens of old birds in full plumage; and a handsome bird it is, with its sable body contrasting so vividly with the crimson on the top of its head. Smaller black and white ones I have seen, and others, when hunting, and therefore at a time when one could not shoot. None of these birds are uncommon.

Geese are usually just as hard to get at in Scandinavia as they are at home. The only time that I was able to get on anything like good terms with them was in the island of Stordö long ago. I had a steady old setter with me in those days; besides holding his point well on all game and snipe he would take the water and retrieve wild fowl. Every evening when

returning to my camp I would notice a gaggle of grey geese flying towards a certain fjord into which flowed a tiny stream. Having surveyed the rocky bed of this, I found it possible to approach within shot of a secluded sandspit, which was their favourite haunt. After this I never failed in getting one or two in the early morning when I required them, which was not often, for by the time I had returned to the camp with a load of these fowl on my back the day was more than half gone. It was infinitely more satisfactory to hunt with the dog for double snipe (*Scolopax Major*), of which there were plenty in the island at certain seasons. There are few birds to equal these if properly cooked.

The wolf cubs which I shot in Finmarken—alluded to before—I secured in rather a curious way. I had gone up to the fjelds prepared for long-tailed ducks, of which there were plenty on the tarns. Upon my gaining the last ridge of this high ground, where the birches ended, two animals rushed through a bit of scrub within easy shot. They looked like small pigs; I bagged them both, and they turned out to be young wolves. The old Quain who was with me never moved, but whispered, "There are more; run on." Rushing up to some large boulders we found that by good luck we had got to the den before the rest of the cubs. These, four in number, finding themselves cut off from their cave, hid under small rocks, and we drew three out and killed them. The mouth of their den was covered with reindeer fur, while bones of the same animals lay in all directions.

Then we discovered that the old wolf had quite lately made tracks over the snowy plain, probably having started upon hearing the gun. The old Quain had kept one cub alive, and tying him up very securely

to a tree, I laid up at some distance, hoping that the old she-wolf would return to see how matters were going on with her family. Little did I know the nature of the wily and cowardly beasts. She never came back at all, for we often used to take a turn round the spot afterwards. The snow remained, but no trace of any animal was upon it, excepting the one trail she had made on the first day. I laid up that night, having sent the man home, till it was too dark to see to shoot, and the mosquitoes played havoc with me, knowing perfectly well that I had to keep still and hardly wink an eye.

The Lapps at once seemed to hear of this raid on the cubs, and finding that I had one of them chained at home, begged that I would kill it right off, for they said that it was bound to escape sooner or later. A Lapp hates a wolf more than anything, and with good reason. The tribe was so overjoyed at six of their deadly foes being killed, and the old one scared into Russia, that a couple of them took the six skins many miles over the fjelds to the nearest Lendsmand, returning after an absence of two days with all the pelts in good order, minus six nails taken from the toes, and bringing me the Government reward of 120 kroners; so that in the end we were well recompensed, not forgetting the old Quain. These soft bluey skins made a nice muff and other things for my wife.

Had I but had that reliable old Quain with me a little later that same season, I should have had an excellent chance at a bear.

My wife and I were canoeing on the river; a couple of young Quains were looking after the boat, and I was fishing. Passing under a high bank we were aware that a tree was being violently shaken. It was a mountain ash, and the red berries which

covered it could be seen above this bank, being agitated by some strong force below and out of sight. Motioning to the men to keep quiet, I proceeded to crawl up the incline, and when nearing the top, and with weapon at the "ready," what was my astonishment and disgust to hear a man springing up behind me and yelling out, "I am not afraid!" Looking round, I saw one of the boatmen brandishing his axe and striding after me. The game was up! I hurried forward, but was only in time to hear something lumbering off through the bushes. The place was somewhat swampy, showing the freshly imprinted hind pads of the bear round the little trees, where he had reached up and ripped the bark down in his efforts to get at the berries. I should like to have given that native ten years' "hard," but of course could do nothing; all zest was taken out of any fishing for the rest of that day.

Shooting birds at another time along this same river, the Reisen, I strolled in to a farmhouse to have a chat with the owner. This was the only inhabited dwelling within forty miles of my hut, and I had pitched my tent near it for the purpose of fishing, in the first instance. As I entered the farm the owner said, "I was just wishing you were near, for the herdboys saw a lot of rypers this morning close to the place. If you like, we will go and look for them and then see to my bear-traps; they are two hours' walk from here, and I have not visited them for a week." As it turned out, the ryper had dispersed on our getting to the spot, and having no dog with me we could not find them, but being anxious to see a bear-trap, I did not delay for the birds.

It took us three hours instead of two before we reached the district where these fearful engines of



destruction were set. At length the farmer climbed a rock, and gazing into a small pocket formed by the mountains, said, "There is an animal in the first trap." On getting near we saw that it was a poor reindeer belonging to the Lapps, as there were no wild ones there. The poor beast was blown up to a great size, having been dead many hours, but the agony it had suffered must have been awful!

These traps consist of an "engine" made on the lines of a rat-gin. They are too heavy for a man to lift, and too powerful for him to set excepting by means of a sort of windlass. The reach of the terrible jaws, armed with four-inch solid spike teeth, may be imagined when I state that the unfortunate deer was caught by the upper part of the shoulder of one of its legs. These teeth had gone through everything, and shattered the bone. We could not press the great spring down, and the farmer said he would have to come up another time with some tool or other to release the beast. He told me that he had caught three or four bears in his time. "And does it kill them soon?" I asked. "Kill them! No; why, I had to shoot every bear. There were two of them caught on different occasions by the front paw, and seeing me coming, each in its turn reared itself up, lifting the whole of the great trap with it."

I then told him to walk ahead of me and show me the other trap. This had not been "thrown," but was so perfectly concealed that any one not knowing of its existence might easily have walked into it, as there was a sort of lead through the bushes straight into its jaws.

The farmer then said he must be going home, and would leave me to shoot. I watched this worthy out of sight and hearing, and then hove a huge rock on to

the plate of the trap, causing it to snap its vile jaws with a loud clang.

I avoided that part of the country for the future, and trust that long ere this such engines have been made illegal, all gathered up, and thrown on to the scrap heap.

## CHAPTER XIV

Island Shooting—Sporting Picnics—Helen, the Lapp Maiden—  
A Sunday *Klapjagt*—The Drive—Glorious Autumn Tints  
—Ducks running into the Forest—Norwegian Game-laws—  
Farmer and Wolf.

To my mind, the most fascinating place and form of shooting consists in working an island, or better still, a group of them ;—it being granted that they contain cover of some sort and are situated in the sea off the wild coast of a country, or, what is usually preferable, that they belong to a private owner and are dotted about on a large inland lake.

During the early 'seventies we found more than one off the coast of Northern Queensland. Wild pigs were in the mangrove scrubs, and quail on the small blue grass plains.

But this has nothing to do with sport in Scandinavia, and I will return to some of the fresh-water islets of that country.

The following description exemplifies "wild-game shooting made easy" for one who, like the writer, can work fairly well on low-lying ground, but who seldom or never now tackles the fjelds.

None of the islands in question rise to a higher elevation than a hundred feet or so. They are carpeted with many sorts of berry which, together with reindeer and other mosses, ferns, fallen timber, and juniper, form an excellent covert for game. Birch, spruce, and other trees grow thickly, with here and there natural openings in the timber. A margin of a hundred yards

or so of swamp and dwarf willow surround many of these smaller islets.

Our party, consisting of three or more guns, puts off from the mainland in a large and fast-sailing skiff, while two or three rowing-boats act as tenders to carry the beaters, who arrive as soon as possible at the first island to be sampled. This is a small one—perhaps a few sheep have been turned on it owing to its being close to the mainland; yet we may always reckon on eight to ten head of game from it, comprising black game, hares, and woodcock.

The next we visit is an islet with a dense scrub in the middle holding capercailzie and black game, whilst in the swamps around it we pick up teal and the solitary snipe.

Running over to a much larger island we find every sort of game upon it, including ryper, and to work it properly this beat takes a couple of hours or more.

And here the ladies join us, bringing a boatload of excellent provisions, whilst Norwegian ale, coffee, tea, and milk are dispensed around as we recline on the sandy margin bordering the lake. Driftwood being in abundance, the men have seen to the fire at the first call to luncheon.

Having thus made good three of the smaller islands, it will be time to sail and row homewards, for there are some miles of lake to cross before we can arrive there.

Other days are devoted to the largest islands, each in its turn. One of these could not be shot properly under two days; elk have been seen on it, and it is favourite ground for ryper. When we shot it last it was during the season which followed the hardest winter known for twenty-five years in Sweden, and yet black game in particular were plentiful, and we made a good bag of these birds, finding young ones all over

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the island—strong fliers they were, affording most sporting snap-shots through the pines.

It was the case of a sporting picnic every day, until gales and snow put a stop to further proceedings, as far as the islands were concerned.

But the “snappet” of all snap-shooting is when one has to deal with the *hjerper* or tree-grouse, and amongst the fir trees where they make their home it takes two, or, better still, three guns to make anything at all of a bag. There were plenty of these birds in the vale of the Örkla back in the 'seventies. We would go for them day after day, but never secured more than half-a-dozen or so upon each occasion. As one stepped silently through the woods, there would be a sudden whirr of wings, and before one had time to wink every bird would be up into one or two fir trees, and within easy shot. Then would we surround those trees, every eye peering into the dark and sombre foliage, where they were squatting on the dense boughs. If one was at length “spotted” he seemed to communicate the fact to the others, for, with a rocket-like rush, they dived into the recesses of the wood, when it was almost impossible to locate them again. It was a case of throwing up one's gun and letting drive at a fleeting shadow. And they are very careful to keep in these fir thickets too.

This is one of the most delicate birds for the table.

I once was shown some first-rate ryper ground by a Lapp girl. The place was in Sweden, just over the boundary which divides it from Norway, and due east from Elgaaen Kapel on the Fœmund Sjö. I was camped at a hut which I had to myself; a larger one near by was occupied by the fisher-farmer who owned the lake I was fishing. It was a great lemming year,

these little rodents playing around the huts all day, and grubbing up and eating the farmers' grass.

One day I saw a male Lapp approaching my small dwelling, closely followed by a female, who, enveloped as she was in a skin coat and carrying many garments of sorts on her shoulders, and in her hand a long staff, looked in the distance like an old witch.

Lapps, as a rule, upon accosting a stranger, yell and howl their words at him, so accustomed are they to pitching their voices when with their reindeer. The woman went into the farmer's hut, the man came straight into mine, and without any preliminary salute or conversation, holloed out—

"Have you any fish?" Before I could answer, he resumed with a yell, "Have you brandy?"

He had evidently already supplied himself with some of the latter, and I told him to get out, and go to the farmer. He looked surprised, and merely expectorating into my stove, took himself off. He was hardly out of sight when a young girl of about sixteen years of age, clad in a neat modern dress, came tripping up the steps and knocked at the door. To my "come in" she entered and seated herself on the rude bench, which, together with a chair, comprised my furniture of this description.

"Have you seen my father's brother?" she inquired.

"If he is the man who was here just now," was my reply, "he went towards the other house."

"Ah, then," she resumed, with a toss of her head, "he has slipped off into the cowshed with his bottle. I knew there was no lost *ren* (*anglicé*, reindeer) down this way; but he drinks much, and I am sure this farmer keeps drink for him."

"How is it you speak Norske like you do?" I asked her.

“Why,” (with evident pride,) “I have been for some time at one of the best Swedish schools. I like it much better than where my people are on the fjelds. My name is Helen.”

“Well, Helen,” I continued, “what are you going to do?”

“Oh, I stay at the farm till that man is sober. The farmer’s wife is very kind, and I sleep in her room. Do you shoot birds?”

“Yes.”

“So; then come with me to-morrow and I will show you plenty.”

This was the female whom I had taken for an old witch in the distance, but who proved to be a mere girl, as intelligent as a town-bred one and almost pretty, with her fair hair neatly done up; but—she smelt strongly of brandy.

She took me to a valley next day on the far side of the lake. There were plenty of ryper as she said, but they had packed and were wild; however, I managed to get five or six brace; a couple of guns with a bit of manœuvring would have made a good bag. Not only were they in the valley but on the slopes of a mountain which towered over it.

“Over that mountain,” she said, “are my people with our deer.”

Like all the Lapps, she had wonderfully quick sight, and retrieved every bird almost as soon as it fell. But I had enough, and we turned for home. I offered her most of the birds, hardly thinking, however, that she would care to be burdened with them, but she was delighted, and said she would send them to her school-mistress.

She gave me her father’s address when we reached the huts, and I saw little more of her. Her

uncle seemed to have disappeared, but they came to bid me good-bye—the man evidently suffering from a recovery and very subdued, the girl dressed again as a Lapp with many garments hanging about her as before, but she seemed very cheerful, and I detected no further smell of spirits about her.

When I returned to England I sent her a packet of Christmas cards, but doubt if they ever reached the remarkable fjeld address which she gave me.

I will now describe a Sunday *klapjagt*. This word signifies the act of beating out game by a number of peasants who form a line and advance, clapping their hands meanwhile, and thus driving the game towards the far end of the wood where the man of gun or rifle has taken up his position. The special occasion to which I allude came about in this way. But first as to the situation of the covert.

A broad valley situated in the high fjelds had on one side of it a bank of some two miles in length, composed of large and small boulders. This varied in breadth from fifty to eighty yards. In ages past this heaped-up mass of rocks had fallen from the mountains towering above. It was thickly overgrown with fir trees, whilst juniper and other shrubs formed a dense covert underneath; and again below these, ferns, lichens, and berried plants formed a covering over the interstices amongst the boulders, so that the difficulty of scrambling through this with a gun in one's hand may be imagined. I essayed to do this once when alone, and after hearing many birds get up out of range at length knocked over a grey hen which I failed to find, and as it was an impossible place to work single-handed gave it up. I had known for many years the three farms which formed the tiny and isolated hamlet near the spot,



and had hunted the whole country around, season after season, but had always fought shy of entering this wood again.

One day, on a certain Saturday, late in the month of October, the head man of one of these farms came into my room and said that his sons and daughters and those of his neighbours, together with some herd-boys, would like to beat this wood for me "for the fun of the thing" on the next day. Having ascertained that without any doubt they wished to do this for their own amusement, I agreed.

Heavy snow had fallen a few days previously, but this had all melted and the next day was perfect—a morn of bracing air on this high land, sunny, and perfectly still—so that there was no question of anything getting the wind of one. I elected to take up a position which I knew of, and where the huge boulders formed a breadth of some sixty yards from the base of the mountain to the valley just below. This "ride" of great rocks was on a slope, the distance being about thirty yards across, and it was perfectly bare of vegetation.

Early on the morning of the day a cheery crowd of about twenty-five young men and maidens, old men and children, assembled in the yard of the farm, dressed in their best; for, used as they are from childhood to these thornless woods, there is no fear of their damaging their apparel in any way. It was agreed that this small army of gay beaters should not advance for an hour, by which time I should have gained my post. Going down the valley I entered the gap, and climbing over the great rocks took up a position behind one of them, from whence I could command the pass. Presently, in the far distance, I could hear the sound of laughing shouts.

As they came nearer, the clapping of hands, mingled with whistles and cries, proved to the ear that they were keeping their line from cliff to valley.

“Velveteens” would have been aghast at such an unruly mob, but in the present instance no birds would face the woodless valley on the one side, nor fly up the high mountains on the other. First a pair of hawks came screaming overhead, scared out of their lives. Then a sudden burst of excited shouts betokened that game was afoot. It proved to be a hare which ambled across on the lower side, presenting an easy shot. The report put up a grey hen which dashed to the right towards the base of the mountain—another easy shot, as she had not got any swing on her. An old blackcock next appeared at express speed; the second barrel stopped him, and I heard him fall behind me through the branches. And that was all. The beaters came out, their mouths all stained with blue berries, and told me that a blackcock had gone back over their heads into the birches which grew on high ground on a slope of the mountain, but that they had seen no young birds. Without a dog we should possibly not have found the brace of black game knocked over, but my friend “Little John” had brought his farm hound in a leash. This animal, being lifted over the rocks, found the grey hen lying dead in a crevice, and after a long search for the other, and following its trail under the trees, “Pil” (or arrow) suddenly made a plunge into a juniper bush, upsetting “Little John,” who, however, was up again in an instant, and in time to seize a fine blackcock from the jaws of his favourite before it had done more than disembowel the bird.

No dresses were torn. The girls' faces were merely flushed with the excitement of fighting their way

through the dense wood—an operation which in most cases had caused their hair to come down. No one was tired, and after a few minutes of rest and refreshment they all proceeded down the valley to beat from the other end of the wood, leaving me at the same spot and facing the other way. There was a narrow bog covered with low bushes between the rocks and the valley, and as "Pil" had shown some excitement in snuffing about this spot, when being taken through it, I took the precaution of placing an outspread newspaper in a conspicuous position in the middle of the shrubs, and with a happy result. It was evident that birds or hares had passed me by means of this covert, not caring to face the bare rocks.

In the next drive I had four hares and a fox down, all shot under the fir trees, as they would not face the paper scare. This time young black game came over the ride, and had there been another gun the bag would have been doubled at least. I should mention that the farmer received some four or five kroner for the fox and its skin, a part of this sum being a reward from the Government. In the birch woods we found some coveys of ryper, and all returned home after a most pleasant and successful day.

During this month of October the whole valley and sides of the mountains were lit up with most resplendent colours. Lichens, mosses, and berried bushes were one vivid mass, comprising every shade from dark purple to gamboge. Miles of this brilliant carpet stretched as far as the eye could reach, whilst against the black rocks of the cliffs, through the leafless birch trees, tall masses of crimson were vividly conspicuous. These were mountain-ash trees, which so far had retained their leaves bearing this beautiful colour. The man who succeeds in photographing colours of every

shade would, in this valley alone, make a small fortune, did he use his camera in October, the ground being free from snow at the time.

Another day I went to a peninsula which ran out into a large lake, for when fishing about this in the early summer we had noticed signs of capercaillie on the shore. Our way led us over a mountain famous for its ptarmigan, or *skarve*, as they are called in Hedemarken. We found these birds as usual running about the highest and barest rocks, bagged a few of them, but had no time to stay, as the pine forest-grown point lay a long way beneath our feet. Now a peninsula is a charming place to shoot, for the gunner can stand at the neck and send the beaters round by boat to drive the game up to him. The more guns the better the chance, for some can take up positions at the sides as well. There were five full-grown birds in this strip: four of them went our right and left, and flew over the water to adjacent points of land, but the fifth, a noble old cock, weighing  $10\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., as we found later, gave a splendid chance coming through the fir trees, and fell at my feet.

This was enough; and I may say once for all that it was only waste to shoot more game than one wanted for oneself, for, with the exception of hares, the farmers never wanted anything of the sort and would not take the trouble to pluck birds, excepting for the stranger within their gates. Selling it was out of the question, at the time and place I speak of; though during the hard winter many were snared and sledged off to the nearest railway and civilised districts.

I have had arguments with Englishmen as to the way the far inland natives keep Sunday. I happen to know pretty well, not from a casual visit, but from living with them. I asked an old man one day why

he never went to church. "Never go!" he said, "why, I went *three* times last year." His nearest church was twenty-five miles away over swampy and rocky fjelds. For myself, I always shoot a duck if I require one on that day, and if the fish are rising, take down my rod and go for them. To defend myself from any imputation of making any one work on the Sabbath day by so doing, I simply state that I infinitely prefer going alone. If a man chooses to come and bring his fishing pole, or retrieve a duck, I cannot help it. The greatest fascination consists in securing your birds or fish unaided, and "I alone did it," as the Frenchman was heard to remark. Most of the coast natives I found to hold other ideas, in that they did not "launch" on Sunday; and very rightly too. This means work, and hard at that.

Later on in these pages I will recount a little bit of folklore as detailed to me by an ancient fisherman, and now I will give a short story of a fight between a wolf and a farmer, which is not an old Saga, but a true account of a struggle which took place many years ago, and this is the way of it:—

I met the man who told the tale at Trysil, which place is situated in Österdalen on the river Trysil, which, running out of Fœmund Sjö, continues its long course until it enters the great Wenern Lake in Sweden. At Trysil I caught some of the large trout on their way up from this great lake; the Norwegians call them *venner lax*, and describe them as land-locked salmon, a fact which has been disputed, but they certainly resembled *S. salar* in appearance to a great extent, and specially in the redness of their flesh. The largest I captured was 8 lbs.

The owner of the fishing, amongst other matters, showed me on another river the whereabouts of the



LUMBERERS' CAMP IN ÖSTERDALEN



old haunts of the beavers before they became extinct, and then, during one stormy day, at his farm he produced a rough and faded sketch of an old man. "Do you see anything remarkable about this?" he asked.

"Only," I replied, "that the man looks as though he wanted to fight, as his fists are doubled up."

"True," he continued, "but he had fought long before this picture was taken, and I will tell you the story. He was a Swede. His grandson was with me long ago, and gave me this picture and recounted the tale thus:—

"His grandfather owned a small farm in Sweden. One night he was woke up by hearing his sheep, in a small barn, which was situated a hundred metres from where he slept, making a terrible noise. As he rushed off he remembered that the door of the sheep hut was double locked, and that his man who had the key would not be home till morning. On reaching the place he threw himself against the door, but it resisted all his efforts; meanwhile, the tumult within was terrible.

"He then mounted to the roof, tore off the turves, and dropped on to what proved to be a dead sheep. He was a clever man, for at the same instant he saw a hole where some animal had forced its way in, and he at once jammed the dead sheep in that, and so stopped anything going out. During all this time the unseen monster was so occupied sucking the blood of one of the sheep that it did not notice him. Then he thought, 'What is the next thing to do?' He was a very determined man, and, whatever happened, the murdering beast should not live. The farmer had no weapon of any sort, but he approached carefully, hidden by many live sheep, to where he heard the animal sucking his victim. Peering stealthily over, all noise stopped



except the panting of the sheep, and he saw eyes looking at him which he knew were not those of his flock. Then he made a grip like lightning on each side of those eyes, and he found that he was holding by the ears a wolf!

“He had not much time to think, however, for the beast threw him backwards, making its jaws clash as it tried to seize him; but he knew that if he once lost a grip of either ear, the *graaben* would have him by the throat and finish him. So they fought for life, the animal plunging towards the hole by which it had entered. It was a fight of hours, for neither could wound the other. Bathed in perspiration, the farmer gripped as he had never gripped before; the wolf, though slightly exhausted, showed no signs of giving in.

“Dawn appeared, the farmer called loudly, and his man approached, inquiring who was there. The farmer could only reply in an exhausted tone, ‘Do not open the door; bring a light and an axe quick, and enter by the roof.’

“Soon the serving man had joined his master, and by the light of the lamp stunned the wolf. ‘Now, he cannot bite, let go,’ he said, as he hit the beast another crushing blow between his master’s hands.

“‘I cannot let go,’ the latter replied, ‘my hands feel dead, I cannot open them.’

“In the result, the wolf was killed outright and its ears cut off, and later on the farmer’s hands were freed from these appendages; but he had so strained and injured the muscles and sinews of fingers and hands, that he could never properly open them again.

“That all-night struggle in the dark without any sort of aid must have been a terrible one, and only a very strong man could have gone through it,” concluded my Trysil friend.

Before closing this chapter, I would like to draw attention to what has been considered one of the mysteries of Norway. I refer to the Moskö Ström, better known to us as the "Maelstrom," a name which we connect with the old fairy stories of ships being sucked into the vortex after being whirled round for hours.

The Moskö Ström is situated southernmost of the Lofoten Islands, just north of 67° north latitude.

I know nothing of it beyond when shooting in the district years ago, the fishermen told me that it was a terrible boil of a place when the sea in that part was influenced by certain currents and gales.

Some years ago a literary man was asked by a publisher to visit it and write a carefully considered article, giving full details of this weird spot. He asked me for maps, I gave him my Amt ones of the district, when he said he was going to start; but I never again heard from him nor had the maps returned. I only know for a fact, that he never went. But this should not prevent others from explaining the mystery of the whirlpool to us.

There is no doubt an excellent article could be written upon it, describing facts only; and during the same trip, a portion of the land farther north, lying to the east of these islands, should be examined and reported on, for from that part and running on the same parallel to the coast of Finland, the land has either greatly risen or the waters have fallen much—which, I believe, has never been proved, so far as I can hear—but the fishermen will show the traveller where, centuries ago, their forefathers could sail their ships between islets lying off the mainland and where now dry land exists.

I remember a portion of the Lofotens well, for I was shooting there with a most amiable and jovial

Prussian cavalry officer. I asked him one night in camp why his nation so hated the Britisher?

"Why," he answered with a laugh, "it is not hate but jealousy, because you live in an island."

"What has that got to do with it?"

He repeated my question. "Because your boundaries are nothing but water, and you have strong ships to patrol your island; whereas, look at us!"

It was the same year, when going from one island to another in a small steamer, we witnessed a battle between an eagle and a fish, and it was long before the bird was able to draw this flat fish from the water and sail away with it. The captain told us that once during his many voyages he had seen an eagle pounce on a halibut in shoal water, but the fish had been too much for his would-be captor, which had driven his talons into the victim and could not free himself, the latter simply sunk and the eagle never came up again.

Another little incident of natural history I will recount here. A large octopus is now in the Natural History Museum in Thronhjelm. This was brought in during 1897, and I saw it on its arrival. The history of its capture, as detailed to me, not only by the fisherman whose boat it had attacked, but also by two other independent witnesses, was as follows:—

The man was leisurely rowing on a calm day close to the rock-bound shore of one of the fjords situated some fifty English miles north of Thronhjelm. All of a sudden a long and glistening arm swept over the stern of the boat and there remained fixed.

The fisherman, thunderstruck at this unwonted apparition, dropped his oars and sprang to his feet, when, like magic, another hideous-looking member was shot out and over the gunwale. The boat now canted, and the man, realising that he was being

attacked by some monster against which his old *tolkniv* was the only available weapon, seized his oars, and laboured with might and main to get his boat into a crevice of the rocks, all the time yelling for his mates, who were not far off.

He had to strain every nerve to drag his hideous cargo after him, for the suckers never relaxed, and when, half exhausted, he got the bows of his craft within reach of willing hands, it took the three men all they knew to haul it up a slight incline, the monster still hanging on even over the bare rocks. Then they belaboured its head with oars and clubs, and having safely secured it, sent off to the nearest station and telegraphed concerning the prize they had secured. It was at once purchased by the museum and carried off to that establishment, having been photographed before its removal.

They stretched its arms out before preparing it. I measured the two longest arms, they were five alen (or 10 feet 4 inches) each in length—this over all, together with the great carpet-bag-looking body, gave a measurement of 30 feet across.

One must ask for the *blæk sproiter*, for “ink squirter” is the ordinary Norwegian term for the beast. I last saw it lying lifelike in a long glass-covered case, which was full of spirit, so that the whole contents could be plainly seen; naturally, in the case the longest arms have to be folded once. The large protruding eyes were still visible, and the powerful, bluish-coloured, parrot-like beak. *Note.*—The plump octopus in spirits should be asked for, as there are besides some uninteresting-looking dried limbs only, of another one.

I have often heard of a monster fish in Scandinavia, once at the Storsjö in Jemtland, Sweden,

and at another time in a fresh-water lake in Norway. In both these enormous inland lakes it was seen for a short time only. At the one in Norway the fisherman, whom I knew to be a quiet and truthful man during many outings I had with him, declared that he once saw a monstrous great fish, as long as his boat, basking on the top of the water; he could not make out its shape, and hesitated to pull towards it; at length it disappeared, to his great relief.

A naturalist to whom I afterwards mentioned the matter said it might have been a specimen of *Silurus Glanis*. I can only say that I have never ceased to feel curious on this subject.

Some of the ducks which frequent Scandinavia possess a habit which I have never noticed in that land of Anas, Australia, or anywhere else; and I cannot close this chapter without describing this wily trick, and the way in which we at length bowled them out. Many times had these medium-sized grey and brown birds disappeared amongst the reeds, not to be seen again that day.

On one occasion my son and I marked about a dozen of them swim into one quite small and isolated bunch of reeds right in shore. We worked the punt over every bit of the weed, and finding nothing there, landed, trod out the bushes on the bank, and went some hundred yards up the hillside. Spending a good hour at this work, seeking out every hole and corner, we eventually came to the conclusion that the earth had swallowed them, for we had proved to our satisfaction that the water had not.

On many subsequent days the birds weathered us in this mysterious manner, though we secured other sorts, such as mallard, golden eye, scoters, and teal.

The next season I visited the place, and this time

had a dog with me. The setter drew up in a promontory of reeds, which we had entered from the land side, and I had six of these same ducks down in as many minutes, all of which were retrieved by the Norwegian boatman from the water. A seventh wounded bird dived over a bay; we went round, and the setter found it up in the wood under an old stump. Then the bitch disappeared at a gallop through the thick bush and up the mountain-side, whilst we returned to the brink of the lagoon. Quite ten minutes elapsed, when to our astonishment—for the Norwegian had never seen a similar case—ducks came flying through the air from nearly the top of the hill, thousands of yards away, and as they came close over our heads, intending to pitch on the water immediately behind us, afforded most sporting shots. The pace that they must have run, not waddled, up that mountain on hearing the first shots must have been great to have covered such a distance in the time. The setter had “rounded” them up and started them back; the mystery was solved, and ever after, when we had a dog, we specially liked to see this class of duck enter the reeds.

I will conclude with a short notice concerning the Norwegian game laws.

Hares, capercaillie hens, grey hens, and willow-grouse may be shot from 25th August to 14th March.

Cock capercaillie and blackcock may be shot during the above-mentioned period, and also from 15th to 31st May.

Ryper may be shot from 25th August to 31st March, and in some districts of Lofoten (Gundö and Vesteraalen Islands) until and including 1904, from the 20th August. Lofoten Islands, until and including 1905.

In any case a stranger would have to take out a licence costing 100 kroners—say £5, 11s. But as there are some variations as to shooting in different Amts or districts, I should advise any one seeking exact information to send to Messrs. Halvorsen and Larsen, of Christiania, for the sporting official pocket Almanac, which contains every rule and law affecting Norwegian sport. There are several excellent little maps in the booklet, and it contains interesting and useful information on other subjects.

Mr. Harold Wergeland, himself a thorough and well-known sportsman, who is secretary of the "Hunting and Fishing Association," was kind enough to send me this book.

## CHAPTER XV

### LEMMINGS

*Myodes Lemmus*—Ancient Fables concerning them—Breed faster than Rabbits—Mysterious Habits—Ultimate Fate and Disappearance.

I MENTIONED the fact that in one place in Sweden—it was where the Lapp and his niece paid me a visit—there were many of these little rodents about. In fact it was a “lemming year,” and the little, guinea-pig-looking creatures were in countless thousands.

Twice before I had been in Norway during these great migrations. One remarkable fact is that a lemming year is almost always a good game year. I did not admire the little wretches, because they never took the trouble to get out of the way of one's sporting dogs, but would, on the contrary, sit up, and spit, and squeak at them, thus distracting the animals and drawing their attention from rightful game. During their gambols outside my hut, wherever I was, I tried to feed them with bread, hoping they would fight over it—they never touched it, though perfectly tame. The wonder to me was what became of them, as they always headed west during these migratory years, arriving at last at the ocean.

I will now quote from Professor Collett's book as to their habits, for, great naturalist as he is, he has made a special study of the lemming.

The Professor takes the lead in superintending the museums of Norway. I had the pleasure of meeting



him first many years ago near the Porsanger fjord, where he was collecting birds, and was much struck with the fact of his not only skinning, but setting these up the same day on which he had shot them. As I had done a share of taxidermy myself in Queensland, this seemed to me wonderful—to carry birds about with you while travelling, set up perfectly in lifelike attitudes. I met him again during February of this year in his Natural History Museum in Christiania, and at a specially interesting time, for he was dealing with the musk oxen and Arctic wolves which Captain Sverdrup had lately brought down, together with other skins, from the Arctic regions in the *Fram*. One white wolf which I witnessed being set up was the largest I ever saw in my life, dead or alive.

I will now turn to the Professor's pamphlet. It is headed:—

“*Myodes lemmus*: ITS HABITS AND MIGRATIONS  
IN NORWAY.

“Of all European land mammals, *M. lemmus* is probably the only one, which, at present, may be said to have its principal home in Norway.

“The genus numbers, as is known, but three species. Its nearest relative, *M. obensis*, does not appear further eastward than the White Sea.

“Considerably more divergent in appearance and habits is *M. shisticolor*, which, unlike the others, inhabits the region of the coniferous woods. The species occurs more or less numerously throughout the south of Norway, Central Sweden, and Central Siberia. *M. lemmus*, as is known, has been found in a fossil state in the post-pliocene formations (the glacial period) as far south as Saxony, and likewise in England.

“The first author who speaks more fully of *M. lemmus*, is the Bavarian, Jacob Ziegler, in 1532, and he explains that whilst staying in Rome in 1522, two archbishops from Trondhjem, who were present there during his sojourn,

advanced the theory that the lemmings descended from the clouds.

"There is also a rare treatise containing an account which relates that some 'good tradesmen' during the autumn of 1579 found the lemmings in great multitudes in Bergen Stift (this is thus the first occasion on which a migratory year is alluded to). The animals had fallen down there from the skies, and in proof of the truth of their statement, they took back with them to their homes in the Hanse Towns a few dried specimens.

"The home of the lemming is in the birch and willow region, and it may appear even close up to the snow line. Except during migratory years they live hidden and obscure. This is partly due to their appearing almost exclusively after the evening twilight has commenced; and partly to their keeping chiefly to their burrows or amongst the tussocks.

"*Breeding Conditions.*—In the prolific (and migratory) year, 1891, during a residence in the mountain districts near Lillehammer, I had an opportunity of making a number of observations on their conditions of propagation in their true home.

"The *first* litter was probably born shortly after the commencement of spring. In August the young of this set were about the size of the old ones. The *second* litter of young were in August somewhat more than half grown. During August the young of the *third* litter were about the size of a pigeon's egg, and still lay either in the nest or remained in its immediate neighbourhood. The parents which suckled these young were, as a rule, pregnant with the *fourth* set.

"The number of young in a litter appears to be greatest in the middle of summer, or in the second litter; as a rule it is then eight or more. The litters produced during the course of the summer follow so closely one upon the other, that the one set is barely allowed time to leave the nest ere the next lot arrives.

"During prolific years, a wandering tendency arises in many of the lesser rodents and other animals, and as soon as the multitudes become palpably greater than the rule the emigration commences.

"The enormous multitudes require increased space, and the individuals, which under normal conditions have each an excessively large tract at their disposal, cannot, on account of their disposition, bear the unaccustomed proximity of the numerous neighbours. Involuntarily the indivi-

duals are pressed out to the sides until the edge of the mountain is reached. New swarms follow on; they could not return, but the journey proceeds onwards down the sides of the mountains, and when they once reach the valleys they meet with localities which are quite foreign to them. They then continue blindly on, endeavouring to find a home corresponding to that they have left, but which they never regain. The migratory individuals proceed hopelessly on to a certain death. During these migrations, they appear to forget every sense of danger, often falling headlong down slopes or holes from which they cannot ascend, and where occasionally their bodies may be found in heaps.

“During prolific years they may cause actual destruction both to the meadows and arable land, but in their true homes on the mountain plateaux they can hardly be said to do harm. Their food consists chiefly of grass, of which they principally devour those parts adjoining the roots. The bark of young willows and other shrubs also forms welcome nourishment.

“*Enemies.*—How are the numbers of the superfluous individuals reduced to the normal, and how do the migrations cease?

“All those who reach the lowlands during their wanderings die in exile, and none ever return alive. Men kill them whenever they have a chance, but human interference has, however, but little effect on the masses. Numerous enemies amongst animals work unceasingly for their extermination, and this is of greater consequence. Thousands are devoured by rapacious birds, and other thousands perish from accidents of every kind. But the most active factor in their extermination appears to be infectious diseases, which invariably occur whenever a species of animal has multiplied in excess of its natural numbers. During their normal existence on the mountain plateaux they do not appear to have any partiality for water, even though they may prefer swampy ground for their dwelling-place. On the other hand, it is well known that during the migrations they do not allow themselves to be stopped by river, lakes, or even the arms of a fjord, but trust themselves without hesitation to the mercy of the waves. No stretch of water is too wide for them to cross, if they but see the land on the other side.

“During the great migration in the district of Trondhjem in 1868, a steamer on the Trondhjem fjord steamed into a crowd of swimming lemmings of such vast extent that she took over a quarter of an hour to pass through it, and as far

as one could see from the vessel down the fjord, its waters were covered everywhere with these animals. In their journey west it may be stated that they will not be stopped by the ocean, but blindly yield themselves up to it when they cannot proceed further on land.

"It is, however, undoubtedly during the winter that most deaths take place, when they keep crowded together in a small space. Under those floors of barns in which they have taken up their winter quarters their bodies may be found by the hundred in spring, and it has happened that it has been found necessary to pull down such outhouses or barns in order to remove the decaying carcasses which polluted the air. The long period of black frost, which usually occurs in the lowlands, they do not meet with in their native resorts. Then the winter comes on suddenly, and the sheltering covering of snow lies compactly over the still unfrozen soil. Just as Alpine plants in botanical gardens suffer from lasting frost and require to be covered with mats during the winter, so do the lemmings feel the unaccustomed cold on the hard frozen, and for long, snow-free ground, and this, too, assists in thinning their ranks."

I have known of several cases of reindeer, also cows, devouring lemmings, and Professor Collett corroborates this fact.

## CHAPTER XVI

### BEAVERS

**Their Range in Former Times and Present Day—Food—Work on Land—Disposition—Trees employed—Different Shapes of Lodges—Interiors of Same—Dams—Winter Existence—Migration—Breeding—Superstitions connected with them—Their present Increase—Protective Laws.**

MORE than once when fishing in Scandinavia the peasantry have spoken to me of beavers. When staying near Kile fjord some years ago, a farmer told me that he could show me their lodges within half a day's march; and on a river in Sweden, where the water ran still and deep between muddy banks, an old inhabitant informed me that during his grandfather's time this stream swarmed with the animals, but that they had long been completely killed out for their skins.

As it may interest those who, like myself, take an interest in anything Norwegian, and likewise have never seen a wild beaver, I will quote from a book of Professor Collett's on the subject:—

“The beaver still belongs to the fauna of Norway, and will in all probability be retained amongst it well into the next century, provided only the small amount of care is taken in protecting it as hitherto.

“The appearance of the beaver in Norway has been discussed on several previous occasions by Mr. Cocks, Herr Hagemann, and the author. In 1896 the author had further opportunities of visiting the colonies in Aamli and Nedre Thelemarken, which at present are the most important localities in the land; and after placing himself in communication with intelligent men in the various districts

frequented by the beaver and obtaining the information they were able to supply, he will in the following give a *résumé* of the particulars which are at present obtainable concerning the past and present range and habits of the beaver in Norway.

“THE RANGE OF THE BEAVER IN NORWAY IN FORMER TIMES.

“Trade in beaver skins was carried on early in the Middle Ages. It is probable that most of the Norwegian furs were exported to England. But the animal itself and its appearance have been comparatively seldom recorded.

“In 1608 P. Claussön Friis gives the first indication of its range in Norway, as he speaks of it being in Thelemarken and the valleys of Nedenæs.

“So early as the close of the seventeenth century the beaver had begun to decrease. In the middle of the eighteenth century they were probably still distributed throughout most of the woodland valleys, from the southernmost parts of the country to the farthest confines of Finmarken, but especially in the valleys of the diocese of Christiansand, throughout the inland eastern forest districts, south of the Dovrefjeld; the interior of Nordland, and of Finmarken. They were thus especially prevalent on the frontier of the country. They were invariably less numerous on the west coast, and in parts entirely absent.

“A great number of names to be met with almost everywhere throughout the land still bear the designation of the beaver—Bjon, Bjun-Böver, &c., &c.

“The present range of the beaver in Norway at the present time is chiefly confined to the Stifts of Christiania and Christiansand, the Amt of Nedenæs, as well as that of Lister and Mandal. The largest tribe is at present located in the middle and southern parts of the river Nissen (or Nid) in Nedenæs Amt; other colonies exist in the Topdalselv, and in Sætersdalen. The most eastern parts inhabited by it are the districts of Bamble and the Drangedal (near Skiensfjord); the westernmost, those drained by the river Mandal. The banks of the Nisser elv, on which of late years the beaver has had its main abode, are, for the most part, covered with red-pine forests (*Pinus Sylvestris*). Wherever these are broken by, or interspersed with foliferous trees, the beaver is to be found. It is to be met with on the stretch between Rygendefoss, above Arendal, and the Vraavand in Nedre Thelemarken, as well as in the side valleys and the tarns on

the hills, and many place-names, commencing with the word Bjor or Bjur, originate from it.

"The beaver frequented Bygland certainly well into the 'eighties, but is possibly not established at present in the district, excepting in its remotest north-eastern corner, where the beaver possibly still occurs on the farm Kile, situated to the southward of Štrömsfjord."

In continuation Professor Collett describes the life and habits of the beaver in Norway, and it will be interesting to those acquainted with Canada to remark whether the animals of that country tally in their general mode of life with those of Norway.

"*Food.*—The chief food of the beaver consists of the fresh bark of foliferous trees, especially of *Populus tremula*, together with the accompanying bast, especially of the twigs. All parts of the latter are consumed, the other branches barked. The coarse bark of the trunk is, as a rule, rejected. For winter use, small branches with the bark on are submerged in the water in front of the lodge. Bark that has been gnawed off is not collected for winter provender.

"*Work on Land.*—Most trees are felled within the distance of a hundred paces from the waterside. Less frequently are materials fetched from a distance up to 300 metres, and occasionally high up in steep, and not very accessible, cliffs.

"Beaten tracks led from the lodge to the scene of its operations ashore. It has a longer beat on the bank, and fells trees many hundred metres away from the lodge.

"*Daily Labour.*—Immediately after the break-up of the ice in the spring it commences to search for food, and its spoor is not seldom seen in the snow. Work on the lodge is mainly carried on in the autumn, and almost exclusively at night; but only very seldom does it allow itself to be observed while at its task. It may, however, occasionally too be seen in the daytime, but then, as a rule, when swimming, or without any set task on hand.

"During the migrations it often makes, it may occasionally (especially when it has got quite out of its course) almost entirely forget its shyness, and be found roaming about during the day, and it has happened that it has then even let itself be handled.

"*Disposition.*—If attacked, the beaver defends itself with great courage, and can inflict fearful wounds. The blow it

gives to the surface of the water ere it dives in order to warn others of danger, is so great, that the sound is said to be heard in calm weather at the distance of several kilometres. It is almost impossible to see the beaver when swimming at night, as only its head appears above the surface, and it is so cautious that it quite exceptionally allows itself to be surprised at such a time, or while working. It can proceed under water for several hundred yards.

*"Trees Employed.*—The trees which are felled by the beaver are used both for provender and building materials. With us it prefers the aspen, *P. Tremula*. After that the birch, oak, and two species of alder. Coniferous trees are not felled by it, but may occasionally be used in the construction of the lodge when found drifting.

*"The Felling and Use of the Trees.*—The trees are gnawed all round until a mere stalk remains, which finally breaks under the weight of the tree. The portion gnawed away resembles the ends of two pencils point to point. Small trunks or branches are gnawed in a slanting direction. Only live trees are attacked; they are often forsaken before the gnawing has been effectually completed, and many trees are left standing with gaping wounds, and never touched subsequently. The chips are not used for any purpose. The felled trees lie pointing every way. All parts of small trees are used for food or building materials, and are cut up into suitable lengths.

*"The Construction of the Lodge.*—The lodges are occasionally constructed at no great distance from inhabited places. One lodge which I broke into in May 1896, and which contained young beaver, lay close to the navigable water where the lumber men were wont to pass daily in boats at a distance of some 30 metres. The current of the river is used for transport purposes whenever this is possible. Most lodges are situated on still waters, and there the beaver must itself convey the materials to the lodge, holding the logs between its forepaws, while swimming is effected solely by means of the hind legs. It builds almost exclusively during autumn, from September till far on in November, and chiefly at night.

"The construction of a lodge occupies at least two years, and it is repaired annually.

*"The Shape of the Lodge.*—In Norway, the lodges are of two kinds, round or elongated. With us most of the lodges are of the latter shape. The rounded, conical lodges are rare, and are situated on the banks of ponds with a steady



level of water, either natural, or formed by the beaver itself by means of a dam.

“One such lodge which I examined at Vehus, in Aamli, in July 1895, was situated out on a flat marsh adjoining a pond. The lodge resembled a gigantic ant-hill, and lay a little way above the edge of the water. Its height exceeded 2 metres, and its circumference was about 14 metres. The elongated lodges, which are the most common, are always formed on the banks of a river with a changing level and running water. They may be up to 50 feet in length (15 metres), most, however, are shorter; one half generally lies under water, and thus forms but a submerged passage. The width scarcely exceeds 8 or 9 feet ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 metres); other lodges are shorter. The great length is necessary for preventing the lodge from lying high and dry during a fall in the height of the waters. The exit is always situated at the end of the submerged portion. Another entrance (or outlet) is occasionally to be met with on shore beyond the lodge, and is generally covered with a layer of earth or twigs. It seldom happens that lodges are situated in the immediate neighbourhood of each other, being generally isolated.

“On the Soplandsö (Islet), in Aamli, I saw, in 1895, a double lodge consisting of one large dwelling (inhabited), and a short one by its side. A third lodge was situated 52 paces from this, possibly likewise inhabited.

“*Building Materials.*—When viewed from a distance, the lodge appears to be in a state of disorder. The materials consist of severed branches, a quantity of earth, occasionally some stones. The logs employed are, as a rule, three-fourths of a metre up to 1 metre in length, occasionally 2 metres. Twigs are also used, and these often take root on the roof of the lodge and bear leaves. Small dry drift trees or branches, even those of red pine, which are never used when fresh, and never divided, are occasionally employed and laid on whole. Many of the branches used are stripped of their bark, others left with it on. The branches are laid down irregularly, the interstices between filled up with earth. The thickness of the walls, which are of considerable strength and consistency, is about half a metre or more.

“*The Interior of the Lodge.*—The passage which leads from the submerged portion of the hut to the dwelling-room is single as a rule, but seldom double. The height of the passage is somewhat above half a metre. In clayey soil the interior of the passage becomes, after a time, quite smooth. In the double lodge, previously referred to, which

I opened in 1895, the left, short lodge contained an unoccupied chamber without lining. The right, which was long, and of considerable age, extended for some way under an oak coppice. The chamber in this was situated about 6 metres from the water, half a metre underground, and consisted of an enlargement of the passage to about three-quarters of a metre in height. It was lined with a thick nest of long, thin pieces of bast of the aspen.

"Another lodge, which I broke into in 1896, was easy of access, and might have been opened with the bare hand. It lay on a sloping rock, and had no communication with the soil above it. The passage was rather short; the roof formed of a dense layer of branches supermounted by earth, above which again lay coarse branches.

"The nest, which contained three young ones, situated about the centre of the lodge, was composed of a layer of fine chips. Above the nest, 1 metre further up the passage, there was a spare chamber, which was quite a necessity, as the water was raised so much once a week (for the sake of floating the timber) that in all probability the true nest was flooded each time.

"*The Age of the Lodges.*—The lodges are repaired each year after the injury suffered by them from the flow of ice and floating of timber. They are fit for habitation for possibly twenty to thirty years. During heavy floods in the spring and autumn the lodge is often entirely submerged, and large bits of it loosened and swept away.

"*Burrows.*—Numerous burrows are to be found on the banks of the river near the lodges, of which some are in connection with the latter. They are inhabited especially by young individuals. The entrance is often hidden by grass and is occasionally under water, while a smooth beaten track leads from the water's edge to the entrance of the burrow. The burrows are the first refuges formed by the beaver at those spots where it intends to settle down and build.

"*The Inhabitants of the Lodge.*—It is probable that each lodge is only occupied by one couple, with their young. The members of older litters, provided they have not migrated, live in burrows, or tunnels in the neighbourhood. Single, small, and hastily constructed lodges are probably only occupied by one individual.

"*Dams.*—Dams are formed where the beavers have established themselves by gently flowing streamlets or ponds, in order to regulate the height of water, thereby forming an artificial lake, by the side of which the lodge can be subse-

quently constructed. They are substantially built and difficult to demolish.

"One which I examined at Treungen, July 1895, was formed at the outflow of a forest marsh, through which a streamlet trickled. Where formerly there was but a pool, there lay a pond some few hundred yards in diameter. The dam was entirely built in the course of three weeks, in the summer of 1890. The lodge was situated on the eastern bank of the pond and was conical in shape.

"*Winter Existence.*—During winter the beaver remains quietly in its lodge without, however, hibernating. Sometimes, however, one can see, from its spoor in the snow, that it has been out in search of food. Sometimes it is obliged to proceed with the building during winter when the weather is mild, and it has not completed its task during autumn.

"*Migration.*—The young beaver soon leaves home to found a family for itself, or to seek a new resort. Its wanderings may extend a distance of many miles, and lead over the broad slopes of the mountains, provided it there meets with tarns and streams, and occasionally for a short distance even through the sea water. Owing to this, remote valleys may suddenly become frequented by one or more individuals which endeavour to settle there. Many individuals are lost during the migrations. Even semi-adult individuals may be met with migrating. The beaver utters but few sounds. During its autumnal labours, it occasionally makes a sort of growl. The baby beaver's which I had an opportunity of hearing, in May 1896, resembles that of human infants, but is not often uttered.

"If it is closely chased, it may give a peculiar wail of terror, erect its tail, shake itself, and exhibit its teeth more prominently than otherwise.

"*Breeding.*—On May 24, 1896, I examined a lodge on the Aaslandsö, in Aamli, which contained three baby beavers about fourteen days old. Their eyes had just commenced to open, and they were probably born about the beginning of May. I kept them alive for two days, but they exhibited great inertness, were slow in their movements, never showed any excitement, and never attempted to escape.

"*Superstitions.*—The old idea that some individuals were compelled to do the work of slaves by lying on their backs, acting as a conveyance for the materials which were to be conveyed to the lodge, and being dragged thither by the others, is founded on the fact that the hair on the back is often worn off from the animal's stay in the narrow burrows.

"The power of the beaver-gall to frighten away whales when they approached a boat, is also mentioned by old authors. In some parts the beaver-gall is worn from the garter as a specific against worms. The tail of the beaver is even still spoken of as being employed as a trowel, and in the sixteenth century was regarded as a delicacy of food. The teeth of the beaver are, up to the present time, worn as amulets in Finmarken, partly for ornament, partly as a protection from sickness, and were offered to the gods at the place of sacrifice, and buried in the graves of the heathen Lapps.

"*In Captivity*.—Smith, in 1784, gives an account of tame beavers in Trysil. Two young individuals which were given full liberty became quite tame, and allowed themselves to be handled like puppies. They passed their time partly in a neighbouring river, partly in the rooms. They were fed on bread, milk, and cooked viands, slept during the day, and occupied themselves during the night in forming the furniture and other things in the room into a sort of lodge.

"*Are the Beaver decreasing or increasing in Numbers?*—From the commencement or middle of last century the beaver began gradually to decrease in numbers, and at the beginning of the present century it had disappeared from most parts of the land except in Nedenæs, Nordland, and Finmarken.

"In the middle of the present century it was almost exclusively confined to the first-named district, and was fast becoming extinct even there. The game laws of 1845 checked the decrease, and it cannot be doubted but that of late years it is on the increase, while its range has become extended through constant migration. Many are lost by accident, but of late years fewer have been shot or wilfully destroyed than one might have expected, they being as a rule regarded with indifference by the inhabitants.

"In 1880 Mr. Cocks estimated the number of beaver at about sixty. In 1883, I estimated it at about a hundred, and it may be regarded as probable that since that time the number has been maintained or possibly somewhat increased.

"*Commercial Value*.—In felling trees the beaver undoubtedly does some damage, but in the present beaver districts, the red pine is the most important species of tree, and the injury caused may therefore be regarded as being, on the whole, of no great significance.

"It is therefore seldom persecuted, and beaver which are killed or found dead are not made use of to their full extent.

Norwegian beaver skin is at present very rarely in the market. The beaver-gall is of little value. Our beaver is possibly of some value as specimens for museums.

*“Chase of the Beaver.*—On account of its great watchfulness the beaver is difficult of approach, and it soon notices every device formed for its capture. It is most easily got at by waiting for it by the lodge at night, during the time it works at it.

“At Trysil, at the head of the Österdal valley, towards the close of last century, in addition to the ordinary methods of hunting, leistering with a spear was employed.

*“Game Laws.*—The first decree for the protection of the beaver is to be found in the game laws of 1845, previous to which year it was not protected.

“Under these laws it was provided that the beaver should be preserved till the end of 1855, and after that period only be killed by the proprietor of the estate on which it was found. First in the game laws of 1863 was a fixed close time prescribed. According to these laws the beaver might therefore only be killed from the beginning of August to the end of October, and during that period only by the owner of the ground, who might kill one specimen on each of his registered estates.

“On Crown or commonal lands hunting is prohibited, but on the other hand beaver may be killed indiscriminately on home estates if it does damage there. The penalty for killing a beaver is 80 kroner, and each participator in the chase must pay such fine.

“Of late years two new decrees have come into force for its absolute protection. The one of 1894 protects the beaver throughout the entire Amt of Søndre Bergenhus until the expiration of 1904; the other (dated 1895) throughout the whole of Aamli until the expiration of 1905.

*“The Historic Relics of the Beaver.*—During the years 1870–80 the remains of a beaver dam were discovered on the farm Öftsaas in Vestre Thoten, at a depth of about 5 feet below the surface, at the end of a marsh which was being drained for agricultural purposes. The materials consisted of hazel boughs, all of which bore traces of the beaver’s teeth.”

## CHAPTER XVII

### NORWEGIAN PONIES

Old Stav Horse-market—"Oscar"—Proper Home Treatment—  
Their Arab Descent—Sure-footedness—A fair Equestrienne—  
Side Saddles.

It is of special interest to me to write about these, as besides having used them much in their own country, we bred them for many seasons in England. Simply and properly managed—that is to say, treated on the same lines as they are in their own country—they prove examples of docility, courage, and endurance.

The first one which we conveyed home was a mare that had carried my wife over bad country and deep bogs in Norway, and that, it is needless to say, without making a mistake; she was also a first-rate carriage pony, and we bought her when horses were cheap. This was followed by the purchase of a black stallion, a first-rate trotter, docile and intelligent, which answered every purpose for which he was required, whether in carriage or cart at home; but as he failed somewhat as an entire, I sold him.

During our next trip to Norway, after having spent the fishing season on the north Reisen, my wife and I came south to attend the famous yearly horse-market, which then took place at Stav, but which has since been shifted to another locality.

At this great fair we spent a most pleasant and interesting week; representatives from all Scandinavia

were there, together with Russians and Germans. Scores of stallions were trotted out and their best paces recorded by the Government veterinary surgeon, and each horse underwent a critical examination by the same official and his assistants.

It was thus that at Stav fair we became possessed of one of the best of Norwegian stallions. He took second prize for trotting in the first class; he was four years old, and as sound as a bell, the certificate being made out and signed by the Government veterinary surgeon. He cost £70, and as I had not the cash with me I telegraphed to Mr. Bennet—the founder of the present famous Christiania house—and though he had only seen me but once or twice, he sent up the money by return post.

When we arrived at Christiania with the horse I came across an acquaintance, an old traveller in Norway, who asked me how much I had paid for the animal; upon my telling him he said, "You've been done!" That horse served us well and honestly for ten years, and I then turned the good old beast on to a Scotch moor to end his days.

After we had bought the horse its old master suggested putting it into a sort of hooded vehicle to prove its quietness. It underwent a test on that occasion which would be nothing for a Norwegian pony, but would have started nine out of ten English horses. My wife and I sat in the back of the vehicle, the man mounted the box and put his horse through various paces to show us what he could do by speaking to him—blinkers he never had any more than other ponies I took to England. Presently, whilst turning round to address us on the many good points of his animal, the driver sent the off-wheels of the trap on to a bank, when the whole concern pitched over and

sent us sprawling into the road. The driver sprang up immediately, struck an attitude, and pointing to the horse, said, "See, he has not moved a foot!" This was perfectly true, the only movement it made was to begin browsing on the grass of the roadside. He walked on board the steamer, and into the box of the train at Hull as though to the manner born. A carriage I had already bought—staying at Drammen whilst it was being made—and harness to match.

For many years we drove Oscar in the New Forest. My wife rode him constantly, and he was invariably well behaved. Besides this light work he did all the carting we wanted in a light waggon, and would draw anything he was asked to. He was a sure foal getter, and it used to astonish the farmers to see him driven into one or other of the towns on a market day amongst all their horses without disturbing any of them, during the season.

But then he was treated as he always had been by his old master. The man who looked after him was what is known in the Colonies as a "generally useful"; he followed instructions, and—most important perhaps of all—he was perfectly gentle with the horse and never yelled out nor swore at him.

Oscar had the run of a long chain throughout the summer daily, in the paddock; this was fastened in the usual way to his foot, the other end being pegged down. A short chain came in when he was in harness and one required to stop at any place without taking him out of the trap, a plan that may be seen anywhere in Norway, and which saves much worry and trouble.

I mention all these particulars because I have so often heard the cry that these Norwegian ponies do



not do in England; most certainly they do not if they are treated by the usual home method—that is to say, in a way that I have witnessed, by a rough flash groom who gave one of these ponies four feeds a day; the animal was but little used, had his temper thoroughly spoilt, and showed his appreciation of this unnatural mode of existence by getting the better of every one, and his master wondered at it, “because he was so gentle in Norway.” I have bought ponies for others in Norway, but never heard that they came to any good. Oscar’s stock was just as well-behaved as himself, and what little breaking was required we carried out ourselves. He could always do his twelve miles an hour without urging, and had fine square action. In colour a golden dun with the usual black markings, he could at any time be driven with his mares, and in the stable would be alongside other horses and never give any trouble. In fact, children could play about his legs without his taking any notice, and as my wife drove him several miles over the moors to a neighbouring town with the children for the purpose of dancing lessons, coming back late at night—and this during a whole season—the horse may be described as near perfection as possible.

The foals of mares belonging to neighbouring farmers, as a rule, came with the colour of the sire.

All ponies are dearer now in Scandinavia, but as good ones can be picked up at the horse-markets by judicious choosing, to be followed by gentle handling and a sensible system of feeding. The horse which I have been describing, 14·3 hands in height, came from the Gudbrandsdalen. There is a smaller sort of mountain pony, as active as a goat, known in the country as the “fjeld race.”

A correspondent once wrote :—

“ In all their points the Norwegian ponies give evidence of pure Arab descent, their ancestors having been taken into the country probably by the returned Varangers.”

The rate of travel over Norway's hilly roads is fixed by Government at seven miles an hour. This is plenty fast enough in some parts of the country ; when one is being driven privately by a farmer this pace is usually much exceeded. The best thing I ever saw a pony do in Norway was the manner in which it crossed a ravine with a pack on its back. The man and I had started for a twelve hours' trip over bare and high fjelds which were covered in parts with snow. A week's provisions, blankets, and the usual outfit were packed on the horse, which carried a *klöftsadel* for the purpose. Beyond the fact of the animal's foundering in numerous snowdrifts, which did not affect him in the least, and our coming across a bull and cow elk, no incident occurred until we came to a gorge which split the fjeld in two, and which was not visible until we were right upon it. There was no getting round this, and the farmer proceeded to explore the sides of the ravine, leaving his horse to amuse itself until he returned. The animal, however, made strenuous efforts to follow its master, and so I stayed behind to hold it back. At length the man appeared, and said he had found a way that would do, as his horse was a very sure-footed one. Tying the halter round its neck so that all would be clear, he advanced to the drop of some 60 feet. This consisted of a series of steps to the stream below, very suitable for a goat. The animal, on being told to, jumped on to each ledge slowly and carefully, snuffing and examining each alighting point ere he took off, and making sure of his footing before he took a fresh

leap. He was almost perpendicular as he took each, and the marvel was that the pack held the whole way down. The last bit was a slope of bare rock. Down this he slid on his hind-quarters into the centre of the rocky torrent, where he brought up, and calmly drank.

It was a picturesque sight at some of the farms in that district to see the horses brought in from the woods in the morning, for one of the daughters of the house usually acted as "stockman." At one of the farms specially, which was situated on a tributary of the upper Namsen, two young girls used to take it in turn to bring in the mob. Early each morning might be seen a maiden sitting astride on the bell mare galloping down the mountain track, her long and fair hair trailing in the wind, whilst horses, mares, and foals were flying after her through the bushes till all brought up at the little farmhouse, when the laughing girl sprang to the ground with the agility of a fair acrobat. To ladies who are necessarily wedded to the side-saddle at home, let me say that nothing looked uncouth, but rather that the seat was natural, though I allow that bare legs would hardly be the thing in the hunting field, specially in a thorny country. There were several that rode on a man's saddle in the old Queensland days, and very tidy they looked with their neat boots; but when I suggested many years ago in a sporting paper that this was the only natural seat for both sexes, a medical man came down on me with severity, and declared that such a seat for the female sex would give rise to all sorts of mysterious maladies. He had me there, for who can argue with a doctor excepting one of his own profession; but I happen to know that he was totally wrong. At the same time it must be remembered that such a form of riding, as

well as the exercise of *ski-ing*, should be commenced very early in life. A hundred years hence, when airships take our descendants everywhere, if horses are still going in Great Britain, it will be "the fashion" for women to ride astride.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### HUNTING

Reindeer : a bad Beginning—Kill a Buck—Elk : a poor Commencement—Farmer takes Refuge in a Log—Hunter up a Tree—Bag a Yeld Cow for Meat.

AFTER my earliest experiences on the Dovre fjeld, years elapsed before I went after reindeer again, and I may say at once that I have done but little with these beasts. I started too late, for one thing, when every man's hand was against them. Though there were but a few hunters in the district where I was living, yet the pleasure of wandering alone on the vast fjelds of this lofty region, the utter solitude of these upland valleys, where one could now and then rest on a high peak, and, fanned by the bracing air, spy the country for miles around, caused a charm in these expeditions which compensated much for any lack of sport.

Passing over many days, and long days, when I never saw even fresh tracks, I will tell of the two first bucks which I sighted and—failed to score.

With regard to the first one. It took me, as usual, three hours with my slung rifle before gaining the fjelds from the valley beneath. One of the objects I had in view was to watch a lake which held char, and see from the heights above it whether these fish were rising. I should be enabled to spy the ground for deer from the same eminence. There was a delightful

little scoop out amongst the rocks filled with a luxuriant growth of reindeer moss, and here I basked in the warm sunshine, completely hidden. Miles of fjelds lay at my feet with their rivulets and tarns, an enormous lake was in the far distance, and the char pool close below me.

For some two hours I lay there, and not a fish showed all that time. I happened to be keeping the binoculars on the entrance of a small valley, over which a large bird was swooping, when suddenly a fine buck walked into the vision of the glasses. The distance in a bee-line was half a mile to this valley, but to get the wind right a large circuit would have to be taken. Intently watching, I saw that the animal was snuffing about for a soft place to lie down; and remembering that there was a little corrie, just round a projection in this valley, which I could not view from my present position, I calculated he would make his bed there. He turned the corner very slowly and was out of sight.

By the time that I had got round through the bogs to the mouth of this little gorge, the sun was getting low and black clouds were coming swiftly up, but, so far, the wind was right. Long spying from behind a rock failed to disclose anything in the shape of an animal. The mosquitoes, as usual, knowing that I dare not raise a finger, attacked me unmercifully, specially about the eyes.

Crawling farther along, and peering into the gloom, I was aware of something rushing away, scattering stones in its flight.

The wind had shifted! for now I felt that it was blowing direct from my quarter up into the ravine. It is always tricky in these sorts of places, and the lowering clouds had evidently caused a small whirl-

wind in the confined space. There was nothing further to be done now but to get away home as fast as I could. Knowing these fjelds well, I had little difficulty in negotiating them, but the woods bordering the valley were so dark that I did not reach headquarters till late.

The second occasion on which I lost a good chance was more aggravating, because it was entirely owing to my own carelessness.

Having spied a couple of deer, buck and doe, I saw that to get within shot the only way was to crawl and drag myself over a flat plain; this was luckily covered with small boulders. Having accomplished this, I found myself behind a tiny ridge within 80 or 90 yards of the beasts. As soon as I had recovered my wind, I took a steady aim at the buck and—missed; pulled the second barrel as they galloped off, and saw the ball strike far beyond them and over their heads. During this long crawl I had somehow managed to push the 500-yards sight up! A painful lesson which I never afterwards forgot, for since that event sights and safety-bolts have always claimed first attention.

The next buck which I stalked, and secured, was near Reendalen. He was by himself in a long valley, and I found that, by making a circuit, he could be approached from behind a ridge of rocks. There was no crawling here; by running I soon gained the ridge, and shot him behind the shoulder at 50-yards range. He was very fat, but carried only a medium head. Having gralloched him, I made tracks for the hamlet, when a man fetched him back by bearing portions of the carcase on his shoulders in three or four trips. The head I left with this farmer, who nailed it up over his door.



A GRAND REINDEER BUCK, FROM A LAI'S HERD





I also shot a barren doe near Elgepiggen, and delicious meat it proved, lasting us for some weeks, by being stored in the ice-house.

I was with my brother years afterwards when he shot a couple of reindeer one day on these same fjelds; one carrying a grand head.

Turning now to elk hunting, here also, as with the reindeer, during my first outings after this huge beast, I was completely done, for I had only one possible chance during two weeks' hard hunting. The scene of these trials was to the west of Fœmundsjö. We also boated over and hunted to the east of that great lake, with, however, no result. I say "we," because I was accompanied the whole time by a young farmer who knew the ground, and who also acted as leader of the elk-hound.

The first day we had the luck to come upon fresh tracks of a big bull. Along this spoor, the hound, which had dragged the man up to it, tore along at a pace which threatened to break both wind and limbs, over dead falls, rocks, and swamps. It was a bad day for stalking, being perfectly calm, and there was no doubt, judging by the great strides with which he hurried on, that this elk must have heard us at intervals during our long pursuit. Towards dusk he turned off at a tangent, and my companion said, "He has gone to the lake"; and so he had, and across it, for we followed his tracks to the water's edge and could see where he had waded out in the mud, and doubtless made for the opposite shore. We had never seen him from first to last.

And now we had to camp.

Every old hunter will know what that means if he bears in mind that we were very far from home, had

no overcoats nor blankets, and that the mosquitoes on the borders of that lake were in their vilest mood. We had plenty to eat and drink, and I spent the night tending the fire and coaxing it to smoke as much as possible by piling on green stuff. The young farmer slept very comfortably, and during one of his waking moments told me an interesting story of the only bad night he ever spent.

It appeared that he had wounded an elk; he had no dog with him, and the animal, an old bull, came for him. He had taken the shot, resting his rifle on the hollow butt of a huge tree which lay prone. The underneath portion of the shell of this had decayed, luckily for him. When he had at first pursued the elk to get another shot, he left his knapsack on the top of this log, and directly the enraged beast made for him he had just time to rush down the hill and dive under the hollow timber like a rabbit. As he got in he heard his would-be victim strike his shelter, and during the whole night at intervals it kept plunging and inflicting resounding blows on the timber with its fore-feet, till the prisoner inside thought every minute that the rotten roof would be burst open. Towards morning there was an appalling crash of glass overhead; the animal had come down on the man's knapsack, in which was a large glass bottle full of coffee. This was the end, for the explosion had so disconcerted the beast, that the hunter heard it gallop off, when he crawled out more dead than alive.

I never heard of an elk turning on a man exactly in this manner, but a hunter of ours in Namdalen told me long afterwards that he was cutting wood in a forest one day when a bull elk came through the bushes and charged him. This was during the season when they are hornless. He had just time to climb a

tree to save himself, and there he remained for a couple of hours, the animal during this period walking round and round, and eyeing him severely; the man up the tree meantime throwing small sticks at him which had no effect. At last he broke off a thick dead branch, which made a report like a gun, when the elk, on hearing this dreadfully suggestive sound, bolted for his life and never came back again.

So the night passed in our wretched camp by the shores of the lake. Next morning we started in a drizzling rain to return to the farm, taking another route home. As we passed through a thick forest of small trees, the hound suddenly became excited, and the next moment an elk sprang up out of the grass and disappeared like a flash amongst the timber. I threw up the Express and let drive at the retreating form, which I saw for a bare instant, but never touched it. We found its lair, and, to judge by its tracks, the farmer said it was a very young beast.

The last day that I went out with this man, the hound took us up to what must have been a very fine bull. When we were getting near, I told him to hold the hound whilst I went on. I had gone but a few steps, when what was my astonishment and disgust to see the young farmer rush up to a ridge parallel to me, and stand gazing in the direction of the elk. I then saw a brown shadow disappear like magic into a scrub.

I sat down to gaze at the man, thinking he was mad or drunk. He was neither. He simply said, "If you had fired and killed that elk, we should both have been fined hundreds of dollars. It is forbidden to kill these animals here for five years, and a shot would have been heard by a man who has power to summon us; had it been the other side of that mountain,"

motioning with his hand to a neighbouring hill, "we should have been safe, as no one then would have heard the rifle."

There was nothing more to be said, and I found out a few days later that what he had told me was perfectly true, only that he had somewhat exaggerated the penalty in the matter of the fine, had we been "run in."

However, the place was full of game—we were always turning out birds during these hunting excursions—so I at once took to the gun and a farm-yard dog, and finished up with a very good time indeed.

And now the scene changes once more, and I come to my latest elk hunting, and, for that matter, my last, for the work is more than I could stand nowadays; and even if I could, I am not keen to kill another, though I leave off without having bagged a grand head.

It was in Namdalen. My mate and I had been out for some days without getting a shot, so we decided that, come what might, we must get meat for the camp, and elk "beef" we were both very fond of. Our hunting area was vast, and my hunter suggested that he and I should try the fjeld for tracks which we had seen led in that direction. My mate took the opposite direction, and we started. Having gained the summit of a large fjeld which was surrounded on three sides by forest, we edged along that side of it upon which the wind played from the woods.

All of a sudden the hound turned round rigid as a pointer, inhaling what was evidently a delicious scent, and close by. Stepping forward a few yards and



VIEW FROM TRONFJELLET—ELK FOREST AND REINDEER FIELDS



peeping over the edge of the bank, I saw reclining there a large cow elk peacefully chewing her cud on a grassy slope at the edge of the forest—where, in fact, this ended and the fjeld commenced—and within 40 yards of me. Stepping back, I took counsel with the hunter. He said—

“Keep your eye on her and see whether she has got a calf; also look out for the old bull, who is most likely about. I will meantime go to another point, and if I see either will come round and tell you.”

I remained at my post a good hour, and then, as no calf appeared, I shot her behind the shoulder. She jumped up, ran a few yards, and fell over dead. At the same moment another large cow rushed up and smelt her fallen companion. They were evidently old mates, and it was a most pitiful scene. I had quite a difficulty in frightening this one away, and wished to goodness that I had never touched the first. However, the hunter came up, and was so pleased at there being good meat for all of us—for she proved to be a “yeld” or barren cow, and therefore fat—that regrets died away for the time being at the prospect of kidneys and other delicacies, together with excellent “beef” for the next fortnight or so.

“And I saw the bull,” added my companion; “when you shot, a fine big one broke away out of the wood a hundred yards from where I was lying, and went straight away; he will not stop for many miles. When we have opened this animal we will go and look at his tracks.”

So we took out our knives and gralloched the slain; the amount of chewed leaves in the stomach seemed enormous, it reminded me of the same sort of work with regard to bullocks in Queensland. This



was the first time I had assisted at an elk's obsequies, and it was the first one I had shot.

We never killed another cow on the ground. Soon afterwards I started in quest of my second elk, for the open season for them in Norway is so short that it induces one to go out practically every day.

## CHAPTER XIX

A good "Bloody Dog"—My first Bull—A Chase of many Hours—  
Killed in the Torrent—A plucky Hunter—A Bit of Botany.

MY former experiences connected with hunting this animal, was that I was either wallowing daily in interminable birch swamps, or buried amidst gloomy fir trees.

Here in my latest outing it was all different. Swamps truly—where are they not in country dear to elk?—but continually relieved with mossy knolls covered with various shrubs; the last golden leaves of clumps of birches livening up the landscape, a crimson maple more than once brightening the scene, wild raspberries growing, for choice around ant-hills. These latter, by the way, give the points to a man who is lost in a fog, and has no compass with him, for the great wood-ant so builds his pine-needle nest that it is protected, by a tree for choice, from the northern blasts; whilst the undergrowth consisted of red and green moss and scarlet-tipped cowberry, the bluey-white reindeer moss running through all.

On the eventful day in question we sank the valley and, rising the fjeld, approached certain brightly coloured—spinneys is the word which best describes these light birch woods, reminding one, but for the spongy marshes which surround them, and the snowy mountains which overshadow them, of some old country covert dear to pheasant, cock, or fox. But here we take no notice of a solitary cock rype which

gets up, crowing defiantly, nor to a whole pack of these, mixed with ptarmigan, these latter having been snowed down from the high peaks. The hound is trying the wind for his four-footed quarry, but it is not there, for both rain and snow have been heavy lately, and leaves are falling fast. During such weather the elk betakes himself to the warmer low-lying forests of fir, and in these we sought my second elk.

The hound was young; so was his master. The former rejoiced in a name dear to Germans, and when I informed the hunter that his dog represented both blood and iron, he was exceedingly proud, and being fond of exercising his English, said—

“Yes, he is a good bloody dog; I have killed many elks before him already.”

For some hours our course took us through the woods parallel to a brawling river, but finding nothing but tracks more or less old, we shifted to some high, wooded hills, from whence we could spy a large low-lying wooded valley under the mountains—a very favourite haunt, as my companion said. We sat down and examined every open glade which we could find with our glasses, but could discover nothing; moreover, the hunter said that elk were much given to lying down about midday. So, making a circuit, we descended once more, and on gaining the lower ground, found that the wind had suddenly almost dropped; and what was worse, owing to the gullies and islands of timber, faint zephyrs were wafted from each point of the compass alternately. Yet one of these whiffs caused intense excitement in the hound; he suddenly threw up his head, snuffed “the tainted gale,” and tore off on a zig-zag course, yet pointing in the same direction withal, and dragging his master

over rocks and fallen timber, till he was fain to take the leash up shorter.

How one who at all studies dog nature can read their ways, even their thoughts, after a few hunts with them, whether they be home "smell" dogs or foreign!

After going about a mile the hound in question made a few cautious steps, put his nose high in the air, and gave a glance at his master which plainly said, "He is just over that ridge." The latter picked him up, cautiously peered round a sheltering stump, turned round, made a hideous face at me, in which apparently the elements of anxiety, rage, despair, and terror were depicted, seized me by the collar, forced me downwards—I was already kneeling—and then, perfectly breathless and quivering all over, whispered in a sort of frenzy, "Big ox! big horns! lying down, eating. Take off cap, put rifle on my shoulder, shoot at ribs."

When a man is over the half-century, and has shot beasts in other parts of the world, he doesn't, if he is any good, partake of this class of excitement. It was my turn, evidently, to collar the hunter, so I dragged him down behind a neighbouring log, where I do him the credit of saying that he lay perfectly still till I fired; only the hound was trembling in his arms from suppressed excitement.

I then crept forward, just catching one last agonising appeal to "take off the cap," which there was no need to do, as it was small and of a suitable colour.

I was aware, on cautiously raising my head, of a feeling of intense admiration at the sight which met my view, and a further transitory feeling was a wish that the scene could be photographed, for there was this grand fellow reclining on a mossy bank and chewing his cud under the shelter of a group of the

golden-leaved birches, with the red and yellow lichens framing him in.

Thus I admired him for some minutes, with finger on the trigger, at the distance (afterwards measured) of 85 yards. Yet this delay was not entirely due to admiration. The '500 Express was true to a hair, but the body of the animal was foreshortened; neither side, shoulder, nor ribs could be seen, and the only vulnerable part was the throat. So, dropping on one knee, and resting an elbow on the other, I held for the portion of neck, and squeezed the trigger slowly.

Let those who are being brought up to beasts for the first time bear this in mind—do not snap off with a jerk, but squeeze.

Instantly I found myself enveloped in a dense cloud of smoke, and, ramming in another cartridge, jumped up.

"You have missed him," cried out the hunter, who was out of the smoke; "shoot him in the bottom." But I could see no stern nor anything.

We gained the spot where the elk had been lying, and my companion, who was ahead, dashed himself down with an exclamation of delight, as he cried—

"Look! two pools of blood!"

The hound now tore along the trail, bedewed as it was with splashes of blood. In a short mile we found that the stricken beast had subsided into a walk. Then we saw him going very sick over a ridge, and on this patch of stony ground all signs of blood had disappeared; stranger still, the hound took a totally different line to that which we had seen the elk heading for, and presently we discovered that he had taken up the trail of a cow and calf. Some time had been lost before we discovered the error and came back to where we had last seen the wounded beast,

but for some unaccountable reason the hound would not acknowledge the spoor. What was to be done?

The wind had dropped; the forest utterly silent. I was in despair.

After a bit I said, "Slip the dog."

"He has never been loosed before," observed his master. However, he let him go, and like an arrow he flew in what we both surmised was the right direction, and in a few minutes we heard him baying far away. As we rushed off it ceased, only to be resumed in another direction.

Floundering over bad country, we kept up this wild-goose chase at speed, when the hound returned to us.

"I never knew him act like this before," said his master; "he has been baying the calf, and the old cow has hunted him back."

"Very bad dog," I remarked.

"Yes, but even a prince may err."

And with this answer I was forced to be content.

But what was to be done? The same thought passed through our minds,—take a large ring of country and see if the elk had passed out of it. This cast took us some two hours, and we had almost completed the circle, when we hit on a solitary fresh track, which appeared to me to be rather small for the bull; but after following it for some distance any doubts in the matter were set at rest, for we came to where the elk had lain down, leaving the spongy moss soaked with blood. I had shot him at one o'clock, and now it was five. It would be getting dark by seven, so we marked the spot in case we should have to resume the chase next day.

From here the hound went merrily. In an hour we were at the banks of a tributary of the main river.

Into this we plunged, and picked up the tracks on the other side. Now the scent grew hotter, up and down hills, through swamps, heading for the main river. At length, on approaching this, we viewed him close to the torrent, going slowly; yet in he plunged bravely, and swam his best. This gave us time to dash forward. On gaining the farther bank he stood for an instant, broadside on. Holding my wind for a moment, I was lucky enough to put in a ball behind the shoulder, when he reared up and fell backwards into the flood.

Yet it was a sorrowful sight, before he received the body shot, to see this poor bull, with his great puffy nose hanging low, his big, donkey-like ears drooping as he gazed at us, all wet and dripping, from the farther shore. Tears, as I have heard, course down the face of the hunted stag, but nothing could be more pitiable than the plight of this poor brute.

But the stalker's remark was comforting: "If you had not killed him now he would have got away to die, for the river is unfordable here."

With these words he dashed off down stream, whilst I kept my eye on the body of the elk, which was being rapidly carried down the river, sometimes being sucked under, then head and horns would rise up in some unexpected spot to serve as guide amidst the deep and white fosses.

I was wondering whether after all I should secure the bull, when casting my eyes down stream I saw, to my surprise, the hunter first fording, then swimming the torrent. I can only say that I never saw a Norwegian face a swollen river in this plucky manner before. Having gained the farther bank, he waited till the elk was washed into a backwater, when he

managed to ground him after strenuous exertions, anchored him to boulders, and gralloched him.

It was now getting very dark, and whilst anxious to help him, I found that I could not get with my rifle farther than the wading portion of the waters, which were bitterly cold, so contented myself with making a fire and exchanging signals with the man, who, when he had finished his work, attempted to rejoin me, in spite of my efforts to wave him back. However, he persisted until carried off his legs and down stream, when he struck out boldly, and regained the shore he had just quitted. Then he pantomimed that his coat and waistcoat were on my side of the river; by good luck I found them on a stump, and we both proceeded, taking a parallel course up stream, when he rejoined me by wading far above the spot where the elk had fallen in.

The head of this animal was a pretty, but by no means a grand one—six points on one horn, four on the other—supposed to be a six-year-old beast, a huge body, his weight clean, 43 stone, as near as we could calculate the following day.

We shot other elk after this, and the grand prize was secured by my friend, who richly deserved it after the hard work he went through day after day before he secured it.

The great dark skin of the cow which I first shot has been a comfort to me for some years. It is as thick as a Turkey carpet, it never "sheds," and is far superior to most reindeer skins, or to those of bull elk which I have come across.

Some fine bulls have been shot on this ground since the time I write of. My brother bagged one with a magnificent head within easy reach of headquarters—in fact, found and killed it within two hours



of starting from the lodge; and in 1902 three splendid heads were secured by a tenant. Since then we have disposed of the forest.

The wolves during the earlier years played sad havoc with our elk calves, and though the man we employed either bought poison which had lost its strength, or did not know how to use the stuff, he certainly gave these marauders bad stomach-aches, as shown by their gambols (?) in the snow, and for a long time we have not been troubled with them.

I used to visit that part of the country apart from elk hunting, making the lodge my headquarters for the purpose of fishing, and have enjoyed excellent sport in the upper tributaries of the Namsen, as detailed in former chapters.

In the foregoing account I have mentioned a plant by the name of cowberry.

This is the true name of the little shrub, which for many years others besides myself have dubbed cranberry.

To settle once and for all the proper names of small berried shrubs, which had caused much discussion, I sent a few specimens to Professor Scott Elliot, who kindly named them for me. Thus:—

“The little red-flowered trailing plant is *Vaccinium Oxycoccus*. Cranberry proper.”

This, I may mention, runs over bogs, and is *Tranebær* in Norwegian.

“The box-leaved plant with cluster of red berries is *Vaccinium Vitis idæa*. Cowberry.”

This is what we loosely call cranberry, and ask for in its preserved form as *Tyttebær Syltetöi*, for which the dictionary gives “preserved whortleberry.”

“*Vaccinium Myrtillus*—the blueberry, whortleberry, or bilberry; very common in Scotland; differs

in leaves, being serrate or notched edges; dark blue berry."

"*Vaccinium uliginosum*, leaves not serrate on edge."

Now this latter is a favourite berry of mine, but for some reason it is ignored by the Scandinavians whom I have met. It bears quantities of dark purple elongated berries, somewhat like a small grape, though not growing in close bunches as that fruit. The flavour is superior to the insipid blueberry, having more of a tart taste. It is known amongst the farmers as *Blokkbær*.

I believe that the large berries which we sometimes see in the home markets are real cranberries, *Schollera Oxycoccos* and *S. Macrocarpus*—the former from Russia, the latter from Chicago.

The little black crowberry, which one finds trailing all over portions of the high fields, is *Empetrium Nigrum*. I never swallowed them, but they are most refreshing and full of juice when chewed. Then there are two sorts of bear-berries, in form like our blackberries, which the bears undoubtedly eat, and are as fond of as they are of sow-thistles, the two plants often growing together.

Of the many interesting weeds which bloom in Norway, I should like to mention first the few which I have many times brought home as rooted specimens and flowered.

Of the many sorts of *Pyrolas*, there are two for preference, *P. uniflora*, and *P. grandiflora*, I think is the name of this last; but it is easily recognised, the one stalk bearing numerous white flowers, after the manner of a lily of the valley. Curiously enough, those growing in the Reisen valley—a specially famous district, by the way, for the botanist, owing to its

wealth of Arctic flora—are deliciously scented; whilst those growing further south—in Jemtland, for example—have no scent whatever.

But the little starry *P. uniflora* is always sweet. The trailing *Linnæa Borealis* is worth bringing home and growing in a hanging basket, and room should be made for some of the saxifrages, specially cotyledon, with its long plumes of white flowers. In England none of these flowers grow such long stalks as they do in Scandinavia.

These wild things require care, and must be sheltered from frost. My plan is to bring them over in their own soil and tend them myself, for the average gardener as a rule takes no interest in “them furrin things.” The common Norwegian Juniper, *Ene*, grows into a handsome little bush in England, and reminds one of old times.

## CHAPTER XX

My Dream—Sportsmen of the Future—Social Condition of the Peasantry—Their honest and “straight” Lives—Religion—Folk-lore—Cookery—Mutton Hams: how to prepare them—English Recipe and Translation.

I WISH presently to place on record a few facts connected with the social condition of the Norwegian peasantry—those of the interior with whom I have lived and had my being for many years. I am not referring to the modernised native who has had tourist roads and civilisation brought up to his district—just as good a man, doubtless, but more or less spoilt by the influx of strangers who pour in every year, and who, naturally enough, must have their comforts and pay for them accordingly.

Many years ago I used to fish at Nedre Vasenden when there was but a humble, dirty hut on the banks of that river. The trout were then plentiful and large.

About five years since I was on my way overland to the Stryn in Nordfjord, passing through this district, and at every hotel—and there were many of them—from the Jolster Vand to my destination, was I assailed by guides, *tolks*, and what-not, who spoke, for the most part, American-English, and insisted upon showing me waterfalls and views, or badgered me to buy expensive carved toys or other rubbish, which was displayed in glass cases. These pests saluted me with scowling looks when I declined their services. Yet doubtless it is of benefit to the country and travellers that these things should be, and likewise desirable that

well-built private lodges should be erected by the present sporting owners who visit Norway, not only for themselves and friends, but for those that come after; for there is little doubt that before a hundred years have passed, the whole country will be cut up into private sporting estates—providing always that the Norwegian Government will permit such a thing.

I will now detail the nature of a late dream, which will certainly come true:—

Two rival sportsmen of the future have dropped into conversation at a house in London, at which they had met by chance one evening.

*First Sportsman.* “So you are going over by the *Meteor*? Well, I believe she’s the latest thing in airships. But how about that bump you all got last season when you spent a night on the Jostedal glacier?”

*Second ditto.* “Oh, don’t alarm yourself. It was only the steering went wrong, and I got down to my salmon river next morning. Besides, the old *Comet* carried us back to London all right. I’d be sorry to go with you in that awful tube. No air! Why, you are under the North Sea, and can see nothing, and have to be planked down at one fixed spot. *We* are half a mile up most of the time in delicious air, excepting when the ‘old man’ drops down to get fresh fish from the boats on the Dogger. *We* enjoy magnificent views, and can bring up where we like on fjeld or in valley.”

*First ditto.* “Yes, a pretty way some of you carry on your so-called sports. How about that special cruise over these fjelds when the passengers dropped dynamite bombs amongst the reindeer, and managed also to blow up a poor old bear. Eh?”

*Second ditto.* “Don’t address me, sir; that was a piratical craft. I wasn’t there, that’s all.”

*First ditto.* “Well, anyhow, I don’t go in for kill-

ing everything, but enjoy my simple pleasures in my motor, which I take with me, see the country, take a turn on the funicular—that one up the Romsdal horn affords the grandest views imaginable. By-the-bye, who invented that scandalous arrangement in connection with a salmon rod, by which, on pressing a button, you bring your fish stunned to the surface?”

*Second ditto.* “I don’t know—some infernal poacher. Yes, I’ve heard and smelt your motors when we’ve been sailing overhead—why, you’ll soon stink every living thing out of the country!”

*First ditto.* “Ha! ha! Who was heavily fined for sailing his rotten punt fifty yards over a private lake, and then shooting the wild fowl which he had scared into the reeds below?”

*Second ditto.* “Take that,” knocking the tube man down with an electric knuckle-duster which he drew from his pocket—and I left them fighting and then awoke.

These are then the sort of times which our descendants may look forward to. Thank goodness we shall not see them. At that period, or previous to it, every rare bird that visits Norway will be killed, as they are in Great Britain now.

But to come back to the present day. What a really good and simple life do these Norwegian farmers lead, more especially those who are in the far interior, cut off, as it were, from civilisation! I have lived amongst such families for weeks, ay, months at a time, and witnessed their “daily round,” monotonous perhaps to us, but not to them, fulfilling, as they do, every moment of their time, as their forefathers did before them, not forgetting to bow their heads momentarily before partaking of their very frugal meal. I

have watched the tiny burying-place of the community being made, each farmer aiding in the work, which consisted of a simple ring fence of palings, with a small wooden belfry in the centre of the ground, and have seen months afterwards the first little mound, bearing the name of a child I had known, and the sadly pathetic words carved roughly on a strip of board at the head—

“Sleep sweetly, thou little one.”

In one of many such districts I remember the miniature church twenty or more English miles from every one, yet central, where service would be conducted a few times a year only, for the good pastor has others of these to attend to, and gets to them in all weathers as best as he can.

More than once I have stayed with these hospitable priests, gentlemen of education, who know far more of our British institutions and literature than many of us do ourselves, and who cheerfully live their backwood life, instilling into their flocks the pure and simple faith of Luther—“Reformat” the farmers call it—and who have one Church and no sects. Bear in mind I am not speaking of Norwegian towns, but of “back blocks.”

With the Norwegian peasant, hospitality abounds in its true sense. An ailing or decrepit old man is never left to shift for himself; even though he be a stranger and penniless he is taken into one of the farms and tended as a member of the family. Many I have thus seen, bedridden, and never leaving the house until carried out for the last time.

Some knowledge of the language and specially a quick ear for pronouncing it, conduces enormously to one's comfort, and it is even better, if one knows but little of the brogue, to go on that, than to take

an interpreter at whose mercy you are in everything connected with sports, movements, and manner of living.

Here, in the far inland districts of which I am writing, the people, as a rule, have a sad, grave, somewhat resigned expression, betokening a long struggle against adverse circumstances ; none the less are they glad to see you and offer all and everything which their poor circumstances can afford. Frugal they must be. Honest they are in every sense of the term. Clothes, money, guns, ammunition, anything and everything, may be left year after year at their farms, and every season upon the return of the stranger these things will be found to have been put away carefully, ready for his advent. Did he not return for years they would be as safe. Sad to say, their national dress is fast disappearing.

A serious simplicity is their national character; there is no grumbling in these out-of-the-world districts. Was it not Sir Walter Besant who said, "The happiest lives are uneventful" ?

I often accompanied the men into the woods during their expeditions to cut birch wood for firing, or to collect bark from the same timber, and without specially seeking for game used to pick up many a head in this manner, for the wood-cutters were always keen to use their eyes on my behalf, and to harness up a farm dog when it had discovered anything ; often would the animal "tree" black game or capercaillie whilst we were thus engaged in the forest. And during the autumn there would be much collecting of reindeer moss on the fjeld, preparatory to sledging it down to the barn for the cows during the winter ; they are very fond of this peculiar moss at that time—stuff that is brittle when dry, but full of milky-looking juice when damp.



I was engaged in assisting in loading the sledge on one occasion when the men saw some black game run over the snow into an isolated clump of spruce. Seeing that I could approach this by means of a gully, and proceeding to crawl along it, as I turned a corner, what was my disgust on viewing Master Reynard ahead of me intent on the same object. I hurried on, and so intent was he, stalking like a dingo, that I got up to him and bowled him over with a shot in the head. The birds got up at the report and out of shot, but this was of no consequence, as the men gained the fox's skin and reward.

Whilst fishing and shooting in the Hedemarken district I used constantly to stay with one or other of the farmers on the shores of the Fœmundsjö, then a noted place for game, the waters of the lake also being famous for trout and enormous shoals of *siik*, and I used to go with the men when hauling their nets in the early morning. The *siik*, which they took in quantities, they used to salt in tubs and send off to the nearest market.

One old man used specially to interest me, for when his day's work was done we would foregather in the room of the hut which gave on the lake, and then, after he had finished his pipe, he would spin yarns connected with the country in the days of his youth: how the game was hunted and the fish taken, also the manner in which elk were caught in the pitfalls, for though this was before his time, yet he knew of several of these pits, and I saw some of them later with the sharp-pointed stakes still remaining at the bottom with which to impale the animals.

One evening he recounted a bit of folklore, which I took down roughly from memory the next day.

"You see that great island," he said, "around

which you have fished? Well, long ago, in my forefathers' days, it was inhabited by freebooters—naked men who used bows and arrows. They were also cannibals.

“One day a beautiful maid of ours belonging to the mainland was wandering through the woods, bewailing the loss of her little brother, who had been carried off by the savages from the island, together with her father's cattle. Suddenly she saw an old man with a grey beard seated in a cave. Trembling, she faltered towards him.

“‘What ails thee, my poor maid, and wherefore dost thou weep?’ said the holy man, whereupon she related the cause of her woe.

“‘Have no further fear,’ he answered, when he heard her tale. ‘Go at once to the margin of the lake which faces the south of this island of the heathen; thou wilt there find a canoe. Take this bow and these arrows, all of which I have blessed. It is now night. As thou comest near to the den of murderers thou wilt see them dancing round their fire, for they have not killed thy brother yet. Thou art in time, since thou hast seen me. Take aim at the first figure thou seest—he will be the bandit chief. Go! I leave the rest in the Almighty's hands.’

“The maiden found the canoe just where she had been told, and approached close under the shadow of the island unobserved. Even as the good man had said, a figure stood outlined against the fire. Her arrow flew straight to its mark, and the chief of the robbers sprang into the air a dead man. Others took his place only to be shot dead by, to them, an invisible hand. At length the rest of the band were so appalled by this terrible and mysterious onslaught that they took to their canoes on the opposite side

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of the island and were never seen again. The maiden found her brother alive and well, and next day she rowed her father and neighbours to the spot, which from that time they made their own; nor did they forget the holy man who had been the means of saving them from their enemies."

As he concluded this recital the old fisherman bowed his head in deep thought, gently murmuring: "It is true, quite true."

I answered nothing, not wishing to disturb his reverie, upon which he raised himself up and with an air of fierceness, and pointing with his bony finger to the place, cried, "I say it is *true*, and look, there is the island to prove it!"

I have come across several of these old sagas told by the natives, but do not now remember them distinctly. Hear these ancient stories through an interpreter, and all the beauty of the tale will be lost.

The present generation are very different to their old-time fathers and grandfathers; just as hospitable in their way, but possessing a certain sort of independence and flashiness which they certainly do not inherit. However, these qualities are not peculiar to the youth of the country of which I am writing. These young men keep up to the family record of pluck and determination, and the way they ride and handle their bicycles, on the still rough and rutty tracks of the interior, is wonderful. During a late visit to an inland district, I asked one of these youths to fetch me a hand-bag which had been left at a farm thirty miles away, thinking he would bring it in his carriage. In the early morning I was woken up by the young man entering my room with the piece of luggage. Using his bicycle, he had taken ten hours for the double trip, over tracks which were composed of stumps, rocks, and ruts; most of his journey was

during utter darkness, and he never carried a lamp. The bag on his shoulders weighed 20 lbs., and he never made a mistake. I examined his bicycle for curiosity. It was a very powerfully built one, and was made at Hamar.

Writing of matters connected with these inland districts, reminds me of a fact which used to puzzle me during the earlier days, and that was, that many people were in the habit of complaining that they never got anything to eat in Norway, and sometimes I even hear such foolish remarks nowadays. It must be a very out-of-the-way part of Norway indeed where you cannot get mutton, beef, or reindeer. As for ingredients for puddings, preserved vegetables, or other soft tack, all these can be purchased in any of the towns.

The small mountain sheep of the country are delicious—that is to say, if the joints are baked under your own supervision. I remember when I bought my first sheep. It drew the steel-yard, when alive, to about 40 lbs., and was cheap enough, though not fat. I smoked the hams, and put the rest in the ice-house. Inquiring for the kidneys, I found they were thrown away; "We never eat such," was the answer. Lesson No. 1. Later on I asked for the sheep's head. "We cast that away," replied the girl. "Why?" "Because we smash it before we knife the sheep." Lesson No. 2.

The first solitary (or double snipe) which I shot appeared at table without the trail! This was too much, and upon upbraiding the daughter of my host for her want of taste, she tartly replied, "Perhaps you would like the next one with the feathers left on!" However, after showing her once how to arrange these delicacies, I had no further trouble.

On the other hand, she showed me how to render a duck, or even an old game bird which had been freshly

shot, tender and juicy for the table. This was by par-boiling it first, and then baking it with plenty of butter.

The habit of smoking mutton hams, which in the old days used to be plentifully carried out in Great Britain, is now almost a lost art. I copied an excellent receipt from the *Field* some time ago, and have used it most years in application to Scandinavia, with complete success. My plan is to send the particulars some time before leaving home to the farmer with whom I am going to stay, and with the wish to assist any one who feels inclined to carry out the same idea, I append it here in both English and Norwegian, as translated by a Norske friend.

#### MUTTON HAMS.

“Select a leg of mutton weighing about 7 lbs., hang it for two days. Take 6 oz. of coarse brown sugar, 1 oz. of saltpetre, 4 oz. of bay salt, and 3 oz. of common salt. Mix them well together, and rub the mixture well into the ham; lay it in a tub with the skin downwards and rub in the mixture every day for a fortnight; then hang the ham in wood smoke for a week.

“It will be found excellent cut into rashers and broiled.”

#### Translation :—

“Vælg et Faarelaar som veier omtrent 7 lbs (3·15 kg.) og lad det hænge i to Dage. Tag 170 grms. grovt brunt Sukker. 30 grms. saltpeter, 120 grms. Havsalt, og 90 grms. Kjøkken-salt; bland dette godt sammen og gnid Blandingen ind i Faarelaaret; læg dette i en Stamp (eller Botte) med Skindet nederst og gnid det med Blandingen hver Dag i 14 Dage; hænge det derpaa i Trærøg i en uge. (Det bliver udmærket godt skaaret i tynde Skiver og ristet.)”

## CHAPTER XXI

### WINTER SPORTS

Concerning Climate—Remarks of Dr. Greve—My Winter Week—  
The *Hoprend*—Holmenkollen—Witnessing the Leaping on  
*Ski*.

IN the following account of winter sports I have endeavoured, as heretofore, to keep to facts, without in any way exaggerating the pleasant time that I passed through myself. It must be borne in mind that I enjoyed what is known as a good time in every sense of the word, and also that I should not have had half such a pleasant period had the weather been unfavourable, when I should have described it as such. After all, one can only relate one's actual experience when relating facts. It is also on the cards that the traveller, arriving the next season, may find all these facts altered. Why? Climate, and nothing else.

Take one case out of many, not a winter but a summer experience. A friend of mine, some years ago, asked me whether I could put him on to a good trout stream in Norway. I told him of such a place—to be exact—close to the railway station of Os, near Røros, where I had fished for two or three days, when it so happened that lakes and rivers were in perfect order, and where I had taken trout and grayling ranging from  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. to 3 lbs., coming back to the farm every evening with a weighty load of fish on my shoulders. He went, and arrived there during a dry summer, all waters being at their lowest. My friend happened to be an experienced

fisherman amongst the clear chalk streams of England, and the fact of finding thin water made but small difference to him, for his sport was good.

But how would it have been with a man who knew nothing of the finer phases of the gentle art? Probably by the end of his first day's quest he would have cursed the whole thing, not omitting the author of his disappointment.

And so with the winter-time. The climate may be very different in February 1904, to what it was in the same month of 1903, and though this latter year was perfect, as I have described, from the time of my arrival on 1st February up to the 19th, it changed to a thaw on the latter date, and I sailed shortly afterwards for home. Luckily, this thaw set in some time after the sports were brought to a close.

I may mention that the Norwegians told me that it was an extraordinary season, for frost and fresh snow should have gone on all through February and March, specially the latter months, which it did not do around Christiania, for I was informed on this point by frequent letters.

What I wish to impress upon my readers, is that I take no responsibility in this matter of climatic conditions; however, telegrams are cheap, and any would-be traveller can easily inform himself as to these conditions before the time of departure.

Intending visitors, invalids or others, must consult physicians or friends on the choice of a residence most suitable to their means or requirements; suffice it to say, that in Norway, the term "sanatorium" is adopted by many country hotels and boarding-houses, and may be misleading in that they have no resident doctor, and are often situated far from all medical aid. These remarks are offered for the sake of those in delicate



FROGNESEETEREN NEAR CHRISTIANIA





health. To others, who are not, however, victims of any organic disease, the change to, rest at, and bracing air of, such resorts will prove more effectual in restoring vitality than the aid of any practitioner.

The following remarks of Dr. Greve, Director of the State Hospital at Christiania, one of the chief Norwegian authorities on hygiene, may be quoted here. He writes :—

“ I regard a sojourn in the inland parts of the country, at the high-lying farms and sanatoriums, as being well calculated to stimulate the nutritive organs, and strengthen a worn-out or disorganised nervous system, as well as giving tone to the skin, and having a favourable influence on chronic catarrh of the respiratory and digestive organs. These benefits will be materially increased when advantage is taken of the rich opportunities there afforded of participating in the various kinds of winter sports. I maintain that a winter stay (by this I mean from the middle of January till the end of March, and a somewhat shorter period for the northern districts), in a well-arranged and sheltered sanatorium or hotel, on, or near the mountains, is even more beneficial in its results than summer residence.”

Up to the present time it is almost solely the summer attractions of Norway that have brought tourists to its shores. The winter allurements are, however, no less inviting—in fact, to those who are well acquainted with the land, they surpass those of the warmer season. The majority of English people, and those of central and southern Europe, have vague ideas concerning a northern winter, which they imagine to be of a severity unsuitable to their constitutions, and repellent to their tastes. Just as our ancestors, through ignorance, regarded Norway as a wild, inhospitable land, abounding in wild beasts and game, and suitable only for the chase, so do we as a rule, through want of experience, regard it as only fit for summer residence, the prevalent views being that

the counter season must be both inclement and, consequently, injurious to health. Such an idea is, however, not only wrong but illogical, for do not thousands flock to Davos and other like resorts in Switzerland and the Tyrol to brace up their enfeebled bodies, and recruit their strength, or enjoy those pleasures which can only be derived when "frost has glazed the glassy plains and crystallised the rills"; and who is there who, once having tasted the delights of Christmas and New Year in Canada, does not long to be there again and sound its praise in the ears of his countrymen? In these places cold is unheeded or not felt, and what applies to them applies equally to those parts of Norway which possess a semi-arctic clime.

It should be remembered that the effect or feeling of cold is not dependent on the severity of frost as indicated by degrees on the scale of a thermometer. People who are sensitive to, and suffer from, the chill consequent on the winds and humid atmosphere of Great Britain and shores of central Europe, are not sensible of cold in the clear, calm, and dry air of the North. The constant, and often rapid, changes of temperature in the British Isles and French littoral are trying even to the strong, and are productive of much injury to the weak, while in a steady climate the reverse is the case. Naturally, in an extensive country like Norway, the varieties of climate are very great, the southern and western coasts being subject to violent and frequent storms from the North Sea and Atlantic, and the shores of Nordland to gales from all quarters; but the opposite is the case in the eastern portion and interior of the land, where the temperature is low, atmospheric pressure high, and weather wonderfully uniform and salubrious. By the end of

October the mountains and plateaux are enshrouded in snow, and December generally sees all the lower regions covered with the cleansing garb of winter. Not only does the snow in falling absorb the impurities of the air, but in decking the face of the earth, prevents the rise of contaminating or injurious atoms, thus leaving the atmosphere untainted by those foul germs so productive of disease in less favoured regions, and it is doubtless due to this fact that Norway holds the first place in Europe in respect to longevity and lowness of death-rate. It is, therefore, undoubtedly a country that offers to invalids the best possible prospects of restitution to health, and this more in the winter than in the summer season.

And now to describe the few pleasant days spent by the writer to view these winter sports.

The 2nd February 1903 was to me a day of wonders, for never in any part of the world have I seen such Titanic leaps, such flying through the air, as this Norwegian *hoprend*, or jumping on *ski*, which I then witnessed.

These competitions take place in many parts of Norway at about the same period, but *the* great day is the first Monday in February. It is the Derby of these winter sports, and he who can win the blue ribbon of the snow is a hero indeed. Then do the youth of Christiania, and indeed of the whole country, assemble to the number of one hundred and more to compete for the King's and other prizes at Holmenkollen, which is situated about five English miles from Christiania.

The slope (or run itself), about 186 yards in length, is situated above a frozen lake and river to a height of 160 feet, whilst the platform (or

take-off) from which the leap is made, is about one-third of the way down. A leap of 60 feet from the take-off represents a fall of 30 feet. Leaps of 70 feet and much more are made amidst the plaudits of thousands of spectators assembled on the frozen waters of the lake, clustered on the surrounding crags, or seated in the tribunes which command both sides of the actual jump.

To view this spectacle was one of my reasons for leaving home at this winter season. The other was that having on a former occasion, as I have stated, visited the high fjelds of Norway during the snow and sledging period of the year, I found that I had derived much benefit from the bracing, dry cold to a relaxed throat which had troubled me for some years. This salutary effect I found repeated in 1903.

Whilst on board Messrs. Wilson's comfortable steamer *Montebello*, previous to my arrival on 31st January at Christiania, I had been told by certain of my fellow passengers that, not having secured a place weeks before, I stood no chance whatever of obtaining a seat in any of the tribunes at Holmenkollen, for that they had all been taken long ago. This statement did not distress me, for I have generally fallen on my legs in Norway, and on this occasion I was doubly fortunate, for, on our coming alongside the Christiania wharf, two friends were kind enough to meet me, having awaited our arrival for two hours, for we had been befogged for that period some three miles from the city.

I had only decided to leave England at the last moment, and had merely written to say that I hoped to arrive in the town such and such a day. These ladies brought me a ticket representing one of the very best tribunes, and from a seat in this I enjoyed a

perfect view on the eventful day. It was delightful to be noiselessly speeding our way through the snow-bedecked streets of the city to the gentle sound of the tinkling sledge bells, warmly tucked up in the bear-skin which each vehicle carries.

To gain the scene of the sports we travelled by electric tram. There was a great rush for these cars, and we were delayed a long time in the queue before emerging on to the platform, but there was no rude pushing in the crowd, and the weather was sunny and still. A short walk up the snowy road from the Holmenkollen terminus, and we gained our seats in good time in a tribune situated close to the take-off.

The scene was very beautiful—the sun shone, the pure snow was everywhere, and bending down the branches of the tall fir trees which surrounded us. On the frozen lake below was a densely packed mass of darkly clothed humanity, yet brightened here and there by the gayer colours of the ladies' apparel. At the rear of this crowd was drawn up a long array of sledges, whilst some of the outspanned ponies were munching their hay. From every coign of vantage across the valley, behind these sledges, hundreds of folk were grouped in lofty openings amongst the fir trees. I heard upon the best authority that not less than 30,000 people were on the ground that day, yet the absence of the English element was remarkable.

There was plenty of time to view these surroundings, for the sports would not begin until the arrival of the Crown Prince. Presently some distant hurrahs denoted his advent on the flat below, and then we descried the royal sleigh, which was specially conspicuous on account of the horses being covered with

a beautiful white network arrangement, which enveloped them from the shoulders and spread gracefully out over the fore part of the vehicle. Leaving the sledge, the Crown Prince and his two sons walked up to the royal tribune; this was situated on the opposite side of the take-off to our own, and thus we were able to see the whole of the royal party, together with Professor Nansen, within a few yards of us.

A bugle sounds one note, and now from snowy heights above glides a figure at ever-increasing speed, motionless, in that the slightly bent body is rigid. In a flash he is past us, as a roebuck may be seen for a couple of seconds darting across a glade in Scotland. The eye scarcely follows this young athlete as he gains the platform overlooking the valley, when this human bird, shod with his 7 or 8 feet of *ski*, assumes the upright, as with one terrific shunt he flies into space, balancing as best he can with extended arms so as to maintain an upright position in the air, at the same time gradually depressing the long wooden skates to meet the sharp descent far below. Naturally the leap is so chosen that no human energy could possibly cause the leaper to alight on the flat, or the shock would kill him. After a flight of some two or three seconds, he alights on the hinder parts of his *ski* with a resounding thud on the snowy slope, and if a good enough man to retain the upright position, he is carried with tremendous impetus down the remaining declivity, and far away on to the flat below. At length, having accomplished this "all standing," he turns at the edge of the crowd, gracefully, yet with scarcely diminished speed, and faces the great drop which he has taken.

He has succeeded.



THE HOPREND—SKI LEAPING





But, on the other hand, should he fall at the end of his flight, little is seen of him at first, for he is carried in a whirlwind of snow at express speed, now his *skis*, now his arms appearing through the snowy little avalanche which he has created. At length he lies an inert mass on the flat, but only for a second or two, for the youngster—few over twenty-two years of age ever take part in these leaping competitions—springs up, shakes the snow from off his clothes, and retires quietly to one side to make room for the next man.

Not always, however, does he come off so well, and on this occasion we saw one performer carried away on a stretcher with a damaged leg, whilst two others smashed their *skis*.

We witnessed this *hoprending* from other points, and the view which struck me as much as any was when we took up a position on the lake, from which we could see the man flying towards us. This was another novelty; it was as though an uncanny bird of prey, or the fabled roc, was descending from the skies, swooping down to seek a victim from the crowd below. We witnessed many falls throughout the day, but were rewarded by seeing the longest jump from what one may call the lake view. On the present occasion the snow was not in the best order for *ski* jumping, being bumpy and hard, which rendered it difficult for the men to guide their *ski* or check side-slipping. The man to whom I refer, a noted jumper, made a grand leap of 102 feet—the longest on Holmenkollen track—but fell. The best "standing jump," which means one in which the man keeps his feet on alighting, and continues to the end without falling, was made by Leif Berg, who covered 93 feet. On such a day, the falls, as might be

expected, were numerous. During the first run, in which 140 men took part, only 64 kept their feet after leaping. On the Solberg per Christiania Rend, a man leaped the great distance of 133 feet, but he fell, and was thus disqualified.



THE HOPREND—SHOWING THE SLOPE



## CHAPTER XXII

History of *Ski-ing*—Useful Hints—Messrs. Wilson's Winter Tour—Horse-racing and *Ski-kjøring*—"Coasting" (or *Kjøelke*) Running—Thrilling Torchlight Spectacle—No Conventionalism.

I SHOULD mention that throughout these pages I have kept to my own experience, as matters presented themselves to my own point of view; but for information connected with the *ski* itself—of which I am ignorant—and its history, I will quote from one of Mr. Crichton Somerville's books. There is no better authority on the subject:—

"*Ski-ing* is decidedly the queen of winter pastimes. Originally adopted, and still carried on as a necessary means of locomotion in districts where snow lies deep and highways lie buried or are unknown, it has, of comparatively late years, been reduced to a veritable pleasure and art by the youth of Norway.

"Its origin cannot be traced. Just as the inventor of the wheel is unknown, so is the discoverer of *ski* lost in oblivion.

"*Ski-ing* for practical purposes has existed in all parts of the Old World from time immemorial, and accompanied the migration of Eastern races westward from the shores of the China Seas, the wilds of Siberia and the Caucasus, through Russia and Central Europe, to the northernmost points of the Scandinavian Peninsula. In form the *ski* vary, and have varied considerably, some being of great length and narrowness, others short and broad, with many varieties between the extremes, each in its way being the most suitable for local conditions. The *ski* consists of a narrow plank of wood, rounded and curved upwards at the toe, furnished with straps or thongs in the centre for fastening to the foot.

"It may here be remarked that it is wrong to call it a snow-shoe, a shoe proper being a covering for the foot, and

that such a term, too, calls to remembrance the Indian or Canadian snow-shoe, which the *ski* in no way resembles. *Ski* is the same word as the English *skid*, meaning a slide or something to slide on, the affinity being even greater in the Swedish appellation *skid*, pl. *skidor* = slides or skates. In flat regions like Russia, *ski-ing* must remain more or less a mere medium of travel, but it is otherwise in hilly or mountainous lands, where slopes can be descended at lightning speed, and where the very changes in the nature of the country itself are sufficient to make such exercise not a mere matter of daily toil, but a pleasure as well.

"It is, therefore, not surprising that the countrymen of Norway, accustomed to the practice from infancy, should find in it a recreation, and vie with each other in obtaining proficiency in the management of the *ski* under all conditions. Nor is it any wonder that when the rustics exhibited their power to the eyes of the unenlightened townfolk the latter should have awakened to the charms of *ski-ing*, adopted it, and finally surpassed their masters in some branches of the art.

"The first men who brought the leaping into notice were the Telemarken peasants—men born and bred to the *ski*. But this was only part of their daily experience in the wilds of their district.

"Up to the close of the seventies they carried all before them, but the youths of the towns, who to that time took but little interest in active life, became struck with the performances of the country swains and fascinated by the 'hop,' as the jumping is called, shook off their lethargy, took to the art, and in practising the leap have become experts, leaving the rustics far behind, while even in cross-country work the latter have now been compelled to succumb to the superior stamina and training of the townsmen.

"It may be asked, 'But what is the charm of *ski-ing*, and why does it supersede all other recreations?'

"One, possibly the best, answer is, 'Come and see,' for no description can convey any adequate idea of its spells. For the benefit, however, of those who like to look before they leap, or who fear that the troubles of a sea voyage of a day and a half from port to port, or the fatigues of a railway journey of some sixty hours from London or Paris to Christiania, would not meet with commensurate reward, it may be necessary to make the following remarks.

"The general day-aspect of a large extent of snow-decked land, as seen from the deck of an incoming vessel or the

windows of a train—a mere study of black and white—may be novel yet uninviting, and the first impression one receives may be that of weariness from the monotony, or of wonderment that life can exist under the stillness and seclusion of an argent pall; but it only requires a little time, a little penetration into the depths of the seemingly frozen wastes, to discover those beauties that transform the country into a veritable fairyland, and arouse those feelings of both sensual and spiritual delight, which, once tasted, will ever after haunt one like a happy, never-to-be-forgotten dream.

“Freedom, a sense of absolute liberty, comes to him who dons the *ski*, producing a feeling of healthy satisfaction productive of pleasure to both body and mind.

“It must not, however, be supposed that *ski-ing* can be learnt in a day. It is an art, and constant practice from one's youth is necessary for the attainment of perfection in its highest forms. The beginner, in procuring an outfit, may safely place himself in the hands of any respectable firm. As a rule, the length of the *ski* ought to correspond to the reach of one's finger tips when the arm is stretched above one's head. The toughest material is ash; the best for speed, birch, or some equally close-fibred hard wood. A staff will be found to be of some assistance in climbing work, but it is best to learn without its aid, and if used it should not be brought in front of the body, as a fall on the end of it might be dangerous.

“Clothing should be light and easy, so as not to hamper the movements of the body or limbs, and good woollen mittens, reaching well up the arm, should be worn on the hands. When commencing to learn, choose a fair slope free from trees or other obstructions, especially at its base, which ought to end on a flat or an incline to facilitate stopping, which will at first be found difficult in any other way than by throwing himself down. The novice will soon discover that he is not master of his *ski*, but they of him, and if running into any danger, such as towards an obstacle or edge of a slope or hollow, he must not hesitate in throwing himself sideways down. To sit or fall in a sitting or backward position may seriously strain the feet or legs, and a stumble forward is equally awkward; to avoid spills the body should invariably be kept at a right angle to the ground one traverses.

“The *ski* are formed, like the Canadian toboggan, for work on deep snow, into which they sink an inch or so, and so obtain, as it were, a grip of the ground. Of late years, a

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large proportion of the townsfolk, more especially ladies, select the highways, which are, as a rule, quite unsuitable for the purpose, being so hard that the flat wooden soles of the *ski* obtain no hold, and slip and slide about in an uncomfortable and ungainly manner. This malpractice ought to be studiously avoided, but should any one be desirous of keeping to paths or roads, snow skates, consisting of iron-shod runners about 2 feet in length, may be employed with advantage.

"That *ski-ing* is a healthy pastime is a fact beyond doubt. Like other things, it may be carried to excess, but on the whole it is productive of the most beneficial results.

"To women and girls it has proved an inestimable blessing. It is not long since that anæmia was a positive curse to them, being no doubt due to home confinement and the want of sufficient exercise in the open air. At that time the fair sex was debarred by public opinion from participating in masculine pursuits, and barely has a decade passed since pater and mater familias looked askance at girls who donned the *ski*. But that is now changed, and with it too the health and dress of their wearers.

"Another competition consists of a cross-country time race of some 13 miles, and a leaping trial on the slope of a hill. In the race the men are started singly at intervals of a few minutes, and if the distance be covered in 1 hour and 50 minutes or thereabouts, it would be considered fast.

"In conclusion it may be added that, should the visitor by any chance miss the Holmenkollen meeting, he need not be disappointed, for he will have ample opportunity of witnessing the leaping at club and county competitions, and at some of these of seeing ladies take part, while above all, and apart from such contests or exhibitions of skill, the ordinary everyday *ski-ing* presents features of the greatest interest, whether from the sport itself, or the insight it gives into the outdoor life of Norwegians, and the healthy freedom of intercourse it promotes between the youth of both sexes."

I brought home many photographs illustrating the various motions and phases in *ski* leaping. These will be readily understood by those who have witnessed this chief of the winter sports, but to those who have not they will be a little difficult to understand. It seems to me, ignorant as I am of the art of photography,



SKIDDING MISS HELEN SOMERVILLE AND "BILLY."



one of the most difficult subjects to deal with. Take one view alone—that of a man apparently flying through the air—this scene, I take it, was snapped from below; and I have another where the man is apparently up in the skies—but a little consideration will render the situation clear.

I wish to mention, in connection with the *ski* leaping, that a traveller whom I met at the time informed me how pleased and satisfied he was with Messrs. Wilson's "Inclusive Tour" for the occasion—thus, ten days from the 29th January (Hull to Christiania and back) for £9, 9s. This included excellent hotel accommodation, a seat to view the sports at Holmenkollen, and the services of an able conductor. I mention this, because it appears to me that a traveller who is unacquainted with Norway in the winter season, and who can only spare himself a short holiday from home, cannot do better than place himself in the hands of the above well-known firm, with a view to witnessing these sports in a satisfactory and comfortable manner.

So far for the first day of the sports.

The 3rd February was devoted to horse-racing and *ski-kjöring*. The races were held on an estate just outside the town. The events consisted of a hurdle race and others; it was the first time that I had ever seen horses raced on snow. *Ski-kjöring* consists in being dragged along on *ski* by a horse. There were several tumbles when the man on *ski* failed to keep the upright, but none of them were dragged any distance, as the horses pulled up. These events did not interest me greatly, and I left the ground before the termination of these forms of sport.

The evening of this day, however, made up for any absence of excitement in the morning. I chartered a

sledge, and drove with some friends to witness the grand torchlight "coaster" meeting at Holmenkollen—at least it was there that we took up our position, for the coasters started from Frognersæter, far above.

The coaster (Norwegian, *kjælke*) is not a toboggan, for the former is specially designed for running on ice, the hard surface of highways, or crusted snow, whilst the Canadian toboggan has no runners, and is formed, like the Norwegian *ski*, for use on soft or loose snow.

The mode of steering the *kjælke* is by means of a pole 15 to 20 feet long, extending for some way astern; a considerable portion of it trails on the ground. This acts as a rudder, and is worked by the aftermost rider gripping it between the arm and the body.

A Norwegian had told me before I witnessed this brilliant *fête* that his countrymen took their pleasures sadly, but on this festive evening I never saw a crowd more gay and full of hearty life. By nine o'clock thousands of people had assembled, and 1200 persons had provided themselves with *kjælker* and steering-poles.

It was a weird but joyous sight to stand by that ice-bound track in the forest, with the fir trees towering overhead, and see coaster after coaster racing from the heights above, each occupant—and sometimes there were four in the sledge—carrying a blazing torch. As they passed close to us, rounding a sharp turn in the track, it seemed impossible that each could descend at this fearsome pace, sometimes two or three abreast, or following closely on each other, or running on to each other's steering poles, without an accident. Yet we saw nothing during the hours we watched them, excepting now and then a gentle collide, so neatly did they steer round the turns whilst keeping up the speed,



KJÆLNING — ANGLIGÉ COASTING



at the same time, warning cries issuing continually from the riders as they dashed down between the double lines of spectators. Every one was merry, and good-humour prevailed throughout the throng.

The fair sex was largely represented in these coasters, adding further brightness to the scene by their warm and gay-coloured dresses and caps, together with their merry mien and rosy complexions, all of which were lit up by the flaming flambeaux which they carried.

Here we were standing on the banked-up heaps of snow at the side of the track for hours, and yet it was not cold. I wore thick clothes and had donned a pair of long Lapp boots, but never felt even chilly. It must, however, be borne in mind that there was no wind whatever. The thermometer at the time marked 20 degrees of frost, which I specially made a note of. Many of these *kjælker* contained "couples" only, the lady reclining with her head on the gentleman's knees when he was steering—otherwise it was the other way about—this was the most natural and comfortable position, and they looked very snug.

I had neither time nor inclination during the week of sports either to venture on *ski* or to be carried along on a *kjælke*, for every day and night was taken up with seeing sights which I had never witnessed before. Hockey on the ice—famous matches in which Norwegians and Swedes competed—skating matches, and sundry games I was not able to attend, being occupied with those that interested me more.

A young lady, who was a proficient at coasting, had more than once expressed a wish to take me for a ride in a coaster, but when the sports were over, the snow became rapidly unfit for coasting or anything else. She told me that it was the habit in her country for



young men and women to go off coasting, *ski-ing* or sledging together, but that she had heard that in England such conduct would be much commented upon. I told her that in my time in Australia we followed the example of her countrymen.

## CHAPTER XXIII

The *Pressfest* of 8th February 1903—Happy Customs—Kindly Speeches—Strikingly Beautiful *Fest* of 9th February—Prize-giving by Crown Prince at Holmenkollen—Christiania in Winter—Impossible Questions to Answer.

ON the 8th February, the *pressfest* took place at the Freemasons' Hall in Christiania, and I had the honour of receiving an invitation from Herr Nandrup and Redaktör Wendelbo.

The *fest* was held in the spacious columned hall, which was beautifully decorated with banners and plants; miniature flags of Norway and Sweden decked the board in twin-like positions, as should be, whilst many of them were draped about different parts of the room. At eight o'clock the literary representatives of Scandinavia and other countries assembled with their guests, forming a gathering of some sixty persons; last, but not least, some half-dozen lady journalists added their charms to the meeting.

The happy custom prevailed of all the men going in to dinner two by two, and I found myself escorted by Redaktör Retvedt of Drammen, who placed me next to himself at table. As he spoke English perfectly—and, for the matter of that, so did the rest of the company—a stranger like myself felt at his ease at once.

After an excellent repast, Mr. Wendelbo spoke, and I may say at once that his speech, and the many that followed, dwelt upon one theme, namely, the further cementing of those kindly feelings which existed betwixt the Norwegians and their guests. This senti-

ment was echoed in the heartiest manner by Lieutenant-General Balche, who returned thanks next on behalf of the Swedes, and who, in the happiest manner, referring to the fact that they had brought their horses from Sweden, at the invitation of their Norwegian hosts, to compete in the races, said, "The Swedes have not come to win prizes, but hearts."

This speech was followed by an equally hearty one of goodwill from Count Clarence Von Rosen, and after further exchanges of courtesies, we moved into another large and handsome hall, where coffee and punch was supplied with liberal profusion. Further speeches followed, numerous healths were drunk, whilst a famous actor also contributed with great success to the hilarity of the evening, and at three o'clock in the morning most of us thought it time to return homewards. Thus, amid much mutual kindness, a memorable evening came to an end.

A more pleasant evening I never spent. The absence of formality, the doing away with introductions after one's first arrival, and the hearty greetings accorded to a stranger, from strangers to himself, caused the newcomer to feel at once *at home*.

I cannot quit the subject without recording the pleasure I had in making the acquaintance of Mr. Crichton Somerville, F.R.G.S., for to him and his I owe a debt of gratitude, not only for the assistance he rendered me in literary matters connected with the sports, and in putting me "up to the ropes" generally, but for the exceeding hospitality accorded me by Mrs. Somerville and himself at their home.

At this dinner I was also introduced to the two Swedish gentlemen before mentioned. They both know England well, and are famous for the improvement they have made in the breed of their horses by

the introduction of pure blood, some of the best sires, they informed me, having been imported by them from England. Lieutenant-General Balche was also good enough to give me a ticket to view the prize-giving *fête* at Holmenkollen for the following day.

The striking and beautiful *fest* of the 9th February, when the Crown Prince gave away the prizes, was a fit termination to the week's winter sport of Norway. I was told that never before had Holmenkollen presented such a brilliant spectacle as upon this occasion; it certainly proved an enjoyable one in every sense of the word.

A sledge was kindly placed at our disposal, and on a beautiful frosty moonlight night we drove the five miles from Christiania, the only sound being the soft tinkling of the bells as we wended our way through the spruce forests.

At eight o'clock the sledge put us down at the cluster of large and ornamental villas which crown the heights of Holmenkollen. Below us lay Christiania with its thousands of twinkling lights, whilst beyond was the fjord stretching as far as the eye could see, bathed in the soft rays of a full moon. Around us hundreds of torches lit up the buildings and snow-covered forest of fir trees, three gigantic ones also burning in front of the Sportstuan Hotel. In the gaily dressed hall of this building refreshments of a substantial nature were served, whilst the interior of all the buildings were lit up by countless electric lights. Large open fireplaces burning large logs added warmth and a cheerful aspect to the whole scene.

At nine o'clock all were assembled in the large dining-room of the Tourist Hotel—a few steps from

the Sportstuan. At one end of this the prizes, consisting chiefly of silver bowls, goblets, and medals, were laid out on round tables; these were to be given to the candidates who had been successful at the various sports of the week. An excellent dessert, flanked by champagne and other wines, was laid out on long tables which ran the whole length of the room. Presently entered the Crown Prince and his sons, accompanied by his suite and the chief magnates of the city, Professor Nansen's form towering above the crowd ere he took his seat to the left of the Prince. The advent of Royalty was heralded by the singing of *Ja vi Elsker*. Then the Prince summoned every one to drink the health of the King. This was heartily responded to amidst deafening hurrahs and the fanfare of trumpets, concluding with the singing of "God Save the King" by the whole company. Speeches followed, Professor Nansen delivering a long one in clear and decisive tones, the gist of this being a hearty welcome to the Swedish and other guests. The officers were in uniform, which gave a martial air to the whole proceedings.

Then the Prince moved to the western end of the hall and gave away the prizes, the favourites amongst the winners, both Swedes and Norwegians, being hoisted on men's shoulders amidst much cheering—an inspiring scene, taking in the nature of the surroundings. More speeches followed, together with much *skaaling*. Huge bonfires had meantime been lit below the terrace, whilst fireworks and bombs brought crowds of those assembled on to the broad verandahs.

The Prince left after the important events of the evening were brought to a close, and the concourse gradually dispersed on its way to the city, whilst the

national songs of both Norway and Sweden cheered the parting guests.

Soon after this it began slowly to thaw—not that the appearance of the country was altered, for it still remained one white sheet up to the time I left; and in fact I had a letter later on, dated the end of March, from Hedemarken, in which the writer said that it snowed heavily all February and March in his district, high up on the fjelds. But the town of Christiania was not white, owing to traffic; in many places it was a vast puddle, with an under layer of ice. However, there is no inconvenience about this, for there is an admirable system of electric trams which take one everywhere; these are generally called *Trik*. If one has to tread the suburbs or bye-lanes, spikes of one sort or another should be fitted to the boots to prevent slipping. There is an excellent club in Christiania, with every convenience and the latest English newspapers, a very fine and new theatre, and the old Tivoli, which latter I remember when I first came to Norway—a style of first-class music-hall which specially suits me, with its plenitude of little round tables, where one can smoke, eat, and move about as one likes.

In fine, there is a freedom about the whole of the Norwegian life which is specially fascinating, and more particularly during this winter season. There is nothing to irritate one—beggars there never are. I mean that there are no professional guides to rush one into “views” at an unfixed tariff, no pestering to make the foreigner buy cheap rubbish, no touts of any description.

Every one attended these sports simply and solely to enjoy themselves—as, in fact, they do every Sunday,

when the good folk resort to these snowy woods in thousands to *ski* and *kjælke* the whole day, and Christiania is empty until their return at night.

I had an interesting talk with a Norwegian officer in English—he had made a complimentary remark concerning my knowledge of his language. I begged to remark that it was not so—no one *knows* a language unless he can talk on every subject—and I said that it was a very different thing chatting with the slow-speaking up-country farmers concerning rural matters and subjects connected with sport from a conversation carried on in the town, where words were used which I had never heard before. How was I to answer fluently a question put to me lately, I asked him, concerning the political situation in England, followed by another about the particulars of the Education Bill—“which,” I said, “I could not even explain in English, nor any one else.”

“Well,” he answered, “we, the dwellers in towns, speak very fast, use a good bit of slang, and clip our words—” “So do we,” I put in. “But this is very interesting about your English politics; what are you?”

“Unionist,” I answered.

“Good,” he resumed. “Now what is the difference between Unionist, Whig, Radical, Tory, and other of your denominations—Liberal-Unionist too, have you not?” I said I would sleep over it. “All right,” he laughingly returned; “but tell me one thing, do not some of you change about and hold to one thing and then another—turn-coat, you call it?”

“Undoubtedly,” I replied, “but the subject does not interest me; let us look at the English horse you brought over lately.”

The fact was, I felt neither capable nor inclined to go into the intricacies and mysteries of politics, but wished, on the other hand, to learn something concerning the improvement in the breeding of their horses, in which the Scandinavians take a great interest. But my acquaintance was not to be put off, as he continued, without taking any notice of my reference to his gee—

“I have been in Portugal, and do you know what they say there of these changeable individuals of their country?”

“No, I do not.”

“Well, they have a proverb to describe them, so: ‘The same dog with another collar’!”

After this we adjourned to a restaurant, and discussed the horse-breeding question over a bottle of the best, and there we stayed for a time to listen to some itinerant singers who gave us, by request, amongst others, a couple of songs: the national one, named *Mit Fædreland*, which I prefer to most others of a like nature, and *Fiskerjenten*, than which there is none prettier, as sung by the sæter girls, and these were country folk who rendered it.



## CHAPTER XXIV

Herr Blix and his little Brochure, which every one should possess—  
He describes the Capital—Its Buildings—Excursions—Hotels  
and Baths.

I SUPPED that night at the Britannia Hotel, which was recommended in the 'seventies by Herr Blix, who wrote a guide at that period in English for the benefit of tourists. One reason why I have always kept to the Britannia is that the restaurant is so excellent.

I owe this much to Herr Blix, and in the hope that others may benefit by his advice, I make a few quotations from his little brochure.

After giving us several pages describing fully the city, the suburbs, and the manufactories of Christiania, he thus concludes the chapter :—

“Of the about 70,000 inhabitants, which Christiania with its suburbs has, is about  $\frac{1}{3}$  natives—Norway-men. The rest is strangers, for the greatest deal Germans and Englishmen. There is also a deal Jews, of which the most part are merchants.

### “THE RYAL NORWEGIAN PALACE

“The palace is situated at the highest point in the upper end of Carl Johans street and can be seen in a very long distance from the sea and from the most visited streets of the city. The stranger who wishes to visit the building inside can do it every day on addressing himself to the porter who lives in a part of the buildings cellar-floor, and this person is always ready to show the stranger around, and it is understood that the stranger will give him a little for his trouble.



ICE HARVEST, NORWAY  
SAWING LINE ACROSS LAKE AND CROSS CUTTING



ICE HARVEST, NORWAY



“THE NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENTS-BUILDING

“This building is situated at left in the upper end of Carl Johans street. It is very pretty and built in the latest style. This also is to be seen by addressing to the porter who lives in the cellar. This man is also very serviceable but expects a little remembering of the stranger.”

Then, under the heading—

“A TRAVEL ROUND CHRISTIANIA

“When You will undertake such a travel You will do best in agreeing with the coachman for the hour after the constant fare for one person or many together in one coach. For ex. You set out from the city's marketplace, the railway square or the parliaments-house on which places the constant stations for the cabs are to be found and which at every time are obliged to be drive after the fares from early in the morning to 11 o'clock evening, but after this time they are not obliged to drive after the constant fares. It is always reasonable of the stranger to note the number of the cab, the hour and then next to make oneself acquainted with the fares for to escape later incommodations; so on starts, f. ex. at first through Mollesgaden, &c.

“RIGSHOSPITALET

“Is situated in the upper end of Agersgaden near Trefoldighedskirken (church). for everybody, who has interesting for to visit it is opportunity by addressing one's self to the authorities who lives there.”

Now we come to the hotels :—

“The hotels which can be worth to take notice of are 4 greater, 1st Class, besides 8 smaller.

“VICTORIA HOTEL

“The Proprietor, Mr. Peerson. The hotel is situated at the corner of Raadhusgaden and Dronningensgade. This is the

most elegant and fashionable hotel in the kingdom, well known and recommended by every stranger for its comfort and completeness. It has a fine entrance and yard-room between the buildings, a beautiful fountain besides an extremely fine veranda in 2th floor in the back-building. Here can the stranger be served in all languages. During summer-time it is always the best pr. post or telyraph to announce the arrival to the hotel, with all explanations of time and how many rooms the stranger wishes, for the hotel is generally so visited that it is necessary if he will have lodging of first class. The stranger will on the steamboat quay and on the railroad station be received of a servant from the hotel, who understands the strangers language. The hotel is but to the strangers disposition, for it exits no public restauration there.

#### “HOTEL KRONPRINSESSE LOUISE

“Situated quite near Victoria hotel, in former time named ‘Hotel du Nord.’ It is undergone several new reperation and amendments after the present pretensions.

#### “HOTEL BRITANNIA

“On the corner of Toldbod—and Strandgaden. manager is Mr. Pedersen well recommended in everything. He is recommended to all strangers from this and foreign country. The restauration is excellent.

#### “HOTEL KONG CARL

“Situated on Jernbanetorvet (railway square). This hotel whose manager is Mr. Kastenbein is recommended to every stranger which has not too great pretensions. The host speaks several languages and is very fit for the customer, for he has been over-keeper in Hotel Victoria for 10 years.”

Besides mentioning other hotels, Mr. Blix, after alluding to the convenient situation near the Stockholm railway station, goes on to say—

“It is here to be found a great deal lodging-houses and honest places for travellers, but I shall not here speak about them for it would be out of the purpose of this small book.

## "GAUSTAD

"Gaustad is the mad-house. It is also worth to visit. Situated half a mile from Christiania, can be visited all days until 7 o'clock in the evening by addressing oneself to the over-surgeon, who is very civil in leading the stranger around. It is always best to accord with the coachman for waiting an hour during the visit for not to run into any difficulty.

## "OLLENDORFFS DOWRY-BUSINESS

"This You will find in Kirkegaden near the towns market-place, where the Magazine is in three floors. This is the greatest in our country, and the effects are fabricated in our own fabrics. Here You can get a complete furniture and dowry; besides there are several things which well amuse a stranger to see.

"Besides we have Mr. Siewers magazine at the towns market-place—which also is worthy to be visited.

## "CHRISTIANIA BATH-PLACES

"Warm, cold, rush—and dusch—baths are to be obtained in the steam-washery in Torvgaden."

Has the tourist symptoms of gout? then—

"We must not forget Mrs. Andersen, who lives in Lakkegaden: she has also a bath place where flower- pine- needles- and leaves-baths are to be received. Gout-apparator Bodin, who lives at the so named Galgebjerg is worth to take notice of, for he has made several wholesome cures with his apparatus.

## "THE REVIEW-PLACE GARDERMOEN

"The stranger, who might wish to take a trip for to visit our review-place can travel on the railway from Christiania 8 o'clock in the morning and step out by the station Trogstad so on takes a walk of  $5/4$  hours, or, if he wishes he can get a horse, which to every time is to be received, and then on arrives to the reviewing-place, where refreshments are to

be received. Thereupon You return on the railway to Christiania which you reach the same evening.

“FRIMURERLOGEN (THE FREE-MASON-LODGE)

“This building is situated between Grev Wedels-place and the citadel. There is an opportunity for strangers to visit it insides when he addresses himself to the landlord who has a restauration in the cellar and who will advise the stranger where the porter lives and this man leads the visitor very willingly round.

“STUDENTERLUMDEN AND THE PARK FOUNDATIONS  
AROUND THE PALACE

“This is the name of the hedged park opposite the university; in the centre is a summer-pavillon raised where is a restauration. The place is very agreable and shadowed and is besides enlivened by a music corps which is placed upon the balcony. The music blows nearly every evening during summer after 8 o'clock; this music-corps is engaged by the tavern-keeper for amusement of the visitors.”

Portions of short trips in which baths and music are included :—

“One stops at Laurvig, and here is now occasion to visit Treschows iron-works and manufactories in this manner, drives farther landward to Sandefjord  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles, stops at K. Gabrielsen or in Heidemarks hotel which first named I will especially recommend. Here it is occasion to take a bath, visit the apparatus of the bath and hear the fine Kjöbenhavnske royal theatre-music which is engaged of the bath every summer and which blows every morning and evening. From Sandefjord you go direct with the steamboat *Bjorn Farmand*, Capt. Gether, one of the country's best and most eminent steam-boat-leaders, known for his accurateness, resoluteness and humanity, in the words proper meaning a gentleman. during the passage you pass several cities at the Christiania fjord and on arrives Christiania 2 o'clock afternoon. You must not forget the bath house which has his proper hotel-building where the restauration is excellent. At dinner is table-d'hôte and during dinner blows a music-corps at the amusement of the customers.”



ESQUIMAUX DOGS ON THE "FRAY"





A page further on, and our indefatigable Mr. Blix takes us back by another route to Sandefjord—back to baths and music—thus :—

“Sandefjord.—Here you stop at one of the hotels and among these I will specially notice that of Mr. K. Gabrielsen to which it is best to telegraph the arrival before your departure from Christiania for to get a first-class lodging, for during summer in the opening of the bath all rooms are filled of strangers, bath-customers and travellers. and then it will be taken care about that you are waited for on the quay from the hotel. After a little recreation on goes down to the bath-house to hear the music, which blows regularly two hours every morning and evening, and where is occasion to see a notable people of which the greatest part is travelling bath-customers from the whole country.”

In concluding this trip, our Mr. Blix thus ends the chapter :—

“We have 2 steamboats on Mjösen: *Skibladner* and *Kong Oscar* which exchanges. The rower sets the passengers ashore at Fjeldhoug which is a naked place at the shore. Here you wait until you see the other steam-boat. When the rower sings out you step again into the same boat which brings you on board in the steam boat which farther brings you to Eidsvold; at this place you will be about 3 o'clock afternoon from which the train brings you back to Christiania where you will be about 7-8 evening.

“The extremely beautiful place Stubdal.—In the last summer has Stubdal been visited of several travellers, young and old from the capital which a person who has been there the last autumn has told, but when this place not publicly is described these few words perhaps will not be unwelcome. Just to recommend this spot to the traveller, who has strength time and opportunity to mount and visit our mountains and mountain-tracts is not our opinion, but as there in the capital is a great deal men of business, old men and school-children who in the summer long for a grove-trip and to come out in the free nature, it is certain that you not easy will find a place near the city which is so fit as this. On the trip to Stubdal you will pass through the beautiful valley Sörkedalen which is situated about 1 mile north from Bogstad, and so it is from the end of the country a sinew—or a

ride road about 1 mile through the forests to Stubdal; but on the way you will pass several clean sinews where good milk is to become, when you come at the time the sinew-girls are there. On Stubdal there is also very clean and honest people but there is very difficult to obtain a night-lodging, for the house is built only for the proper family."

Once more does our good Blix deal with the always necessary ablutions, thus:—

"Smedvolden is a very good and agreeable lodgement. If you wish to take a bath there, you can do it, for the landlord Mr. Blyberg has built a bath-house upon his own ground and every traveller may make use of it, ladies and gentlemen the payment is moderate."

In conclusion, in case the foreigner feels both hungry and dirty when in Christiania, I append the following from page 43 of Mr. Blix's pamphlet:—

"The steam-kitchen (Torvegaden) where You can eat every day from 11½–2½ o'clock.

"The steam-washery and bath (Torvegaden)."

And page 44, for further sight-seeing:—

"Christiania mad house and correction house.

"The institute for blinds (Frognerveien) open every day."

Thus did the foregoing inspire me in the 'seventies, and I am again happy during the present year with my Blix in pocket.

Though the Arctic ship *Fram* was within easy reach of Christiania, I had not an opportunity of visiting her, but learnt something concerning her late voyage, and a good deal about the Esquimaux dogs used by the expedition for drawing the sledges.

Several of the photographs of these animals were given me, all taken on board the *Fram*. They are weird beasts in some respects, and owing to their descent from wolves, partake of the nature of their

ancestors to a great extent in character. Professor Nansen keeps his original pack of these dogs on the mountains which lie above Christiania, for only in high and cold altitudes will they live. More than one attempt has been made to keep this breed of dogs in Christiania, but they have invariably died, the low-lying land not being suited to their constitutions.

Captain Sverdrup, some of whose dogs are represented in the photographs, took up several of the Norwegian elk-hounds for his Arctic expedition. We all know how these will drag a man up to bear, deer, and smaller game, and it was doubtless presumed that they would willingly help in sledge-hauling, yet when it came to the point, they would have none of it, and being literally, as an Arctic explorer informed me, "not worth their grub," were all shot. So it would appear that the Esquimaux dogs with wolf blood in their veins are the only ones suitable in an Arctic expedition. I heard them described as powerful and plucky beasts which would tackle anything.

The ice harvest was going on during my Christiania outing, but I had no day to spare to see the cutting or storing of this.

It used to be a grand trade in which fortunes were made, but has fallen off much of late years, owing chiefly to the fact, I believe, that we at home now make much ice for ourselves. Some of the photographs show where a man is cutting right across a lake, whilst another cross cuts behind him, thus forming large square blocks which may be seen being sledged away in another picture.

And now I will wind up my line.

If friends find half the pleasure in reading this yarn that it has given me to write it—recalling, as it

does, so many pleasant old memories—I shall be more than pleased.

I steamed home in the *Angelo*, and off Arendal and Christiansand we ran right into the hurricane of 28th February, which did so much damage to parts of England and the coasts; but the good ship brought us home without special incident.

THE END

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